



Delivery Support Sessions

HENRY Partnership

October 2024

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Key points from October 2024 sessions

A big thank you once again to all of you who could attend these sessions and share your experiences, questions, thoughts, and solutions. These have been summarised below as a reminder and also for those who couldn't attend.

It was fabulous to have a wide variety of areas with us, including Facilitators who are at the start of their HENRY journey alongside those of you with years of experience. This meant there were opportunities to share valuable tips and solutions as well as hear the continued passion you have for HENRY.

As your Partnership Support Officers, it's so great for us to feel such positivity at the Delivery Support Sessions. There's so much happening to ensure that the needs of the families are being met. We heard about areas offering flexibility through online and face-to-face delivery, along with 1-to-1 delivery, as well as programmes running at different times of day, including some well-attended evening programmes.

It was great to hear so many successes, particularly in topics that are very often challenging, like recruitment and retention. But it was also great to hear that linking with schools, nurseries etc and working with families in their homes can be a rewarding way to obtain referrals or recruit and how these connections encourage families to complete a Programme.

It was wonderful to hear how rewarded many of you are feeling when families build positive relationships with each other and continue their friendships and support networks after the Programme has ended. It very much reflects the skills of the Facilitators to provide a safe space for those friendships to blossom.

It was also inspiring to hear how your dedication to families has encouraged them to make changes in their lifestyles, such as switching from shop-bought baby food to homemade baby food after completing Starting Solids.

We felt particularly grateful to have such a wide variety of experiences at the sessions. This reassured many of our newer Facilitators who expressed some anxiety at the prospect of Facilitating their first group. It was extremely beneficial to hear from areas offering across the age ranges with Preparation for Parenthood, Right from the Start, Growing Up and workshops, once again, responding to the needs of families in your areas.

Challenges and Solutions

Challenge - Recruitment, getting the word out, retention

Solutions include:

- Work with Early Years settings to find out what the needs of the area are
- Gather case studies of previous participants, possibly completing short videos to share with potential participants
- Use previous participants as HENRY 'ambassadors' or 'champions'
- In conversations and communication with potential referrers/families, be clear about the importance of regular attendance and how sessions link to each other and build confidence and learning - explore whether it is the best time for the parent/carer to give the time commitment needed to get full benefit and if not, keep in touch in relation to them attending a future programme/workshop
- Offer taster sessions and advertise these in community newsletters
- Attend community events and give out HENRY leaflets etc
- Attend local community buildings, Family Hubs and see if there is space on notice boards to put up posters and somewhere to display leaflets
- Establish links with Health Visiting and School Nursing teams, local authority staff, schools and nurseries
- Self-referrals work well - ask these participants what encouraged them to come to a Programme/Workshop
- Giving the option of either face-to-face or online programmes/workshops works well
- Download and use the HENRY Display Pack for Healthy Families Right From The Start available on the recruitment page. Contact your local HENRY Coordinator for copies of leaflets/posters too
- Having a creche helps with retention as participants will be much more receptive knowing their children are being looked after
- Use a social media platform such as WhatsApp to share information, answer questions between sessions or for participants to keep in touch with each other and celebrate progress. This encourages 'buy-in' and involvement. We heard from one area where Facilitators join the group too and can respond to questions but this will depend on Facilitator capacity!
- Where work commitments are a barrier to attendance, explore whether lunchtime or evening sessions/workshops could be offered

- Consider offering parents/carers who can't commit to weekly group sessions a one-off workshop, or 1-to-1 programme (if Facilitators have been trained to offer this programme) instead, as these can fit more flexibly around parents commitments and lifestyles
- See the Top Tips for Recruitment and also Retention and Good Attendance here: <https://www.henry.org.uk/practitionerpages/toptips>

Challenge - Working online, facilitating online

Solutions include:

- Having a 'dummy run' delivering HENRY online with colleagues can help build confidence before delivering to parents/carers
- Ask everyone to join 5-10 minutes early to allow time to address any technical issues ready for a prompt start
- Include in conversations prior to the programme/workshop and in group guidelines at the start, how having cameras switched on supports open and relaxed communication and group bonding, and offer to chat to participants 1-to-1 if they have any worries/challenges with doing this
- Give participants the choice of using the chat box or speaking
- Use a cookbook stand for the Facilitator Manual so you don't have to look down
- Or try using two screens
- Use post-its stuck around your screen with key phrases
- If it's difficult to type in contributions, try printing the slide and writing on manually and then holding up or WhatsApping to participants
- We are looking at the use of text boxes to make typing into PowerPoint slides easier
- Have a taster session and discuss the benefits of keeping cameras turned on and microphones off when not speaking
- Facilitate Workshops over a lunchtime to enable working families to attend
- Use Group Guidelines to help keep participants on topic and to keep to timing
- Facilitate evening Programmes and Workshops to accommodate working parents and families who don't have any child care but can attend after their children have gone to bed
- For ideas on using collective rewards online, see the Top Tips for Using Rewards here: <https://www.henry.org.uk/practitionerpages/toptips>

Challenge - Engagement in discussions

Solutions include:

- Communication can be challenging when cameras are switched off. Include in conversations prior to the programme/workshop and in group guidelines at the start, how having cameras switched on supports open and relaxed communication and group bonding, and offer to chat to participants 1-to-1 if they have any worries/challenges with doing this
- In face-to-face groups, use dividing activities to create smaller groups
- In online groups, give the option of using the chat box if participants prefer
- Icebreakers like sharing favourite recipes can help
- If you sense that energy is flagging, use a quick activity break like stretching
- Use open-ended questions and statements such as 'Who'll go next', 'I'm interested to hear your thoughts on' Don't be afraid of silence in the session as usually a participant will speak up
- If you feel a particular participant is struggling with the programme or a topic, you may like to suggest to the whole group an offer of some extra time at the end of the session to discuss topics etc or anything else.
- See the Top Tips for Managing Group Dynamics for other ideas to support quiet/vocal participants here: <https://www.henry.org.uk/practitionerpages/toptips>

Challenge - Getting questionnaires done

Solutions include:

- Use an online translation tool for families where English is an additional language
- Use an introductory session/session 0 to get the baseline questionnaires done
- Allow time at the end of sessions 1 and 8 to complete the questionnaires
- Offer to stay on at the end of the session to support participants with the questionnaires
- Screenshare the questionnaire and go through it with participants
- Use an individual phone call/conversation to complete on behalf of the participant
- If online, put the questionnaire links in the chat so that parents can complete it with Facilitator support if needed

- See the Top Tips for Completing Questionnaires for more ideas:
<https://www.henry.org.uk/practitionerpages/toptips>

Challenge - Facilitators' capacity, Facilitators who are new to delivering

Solutions include:

- Block out time to prepare in your calendar so colleagues can see and respect the time needed
- Speak to your line manager or your HENRY Coordinator if protected time is needed
- Consider delivering online, where sessions are shorter and there is no travel time
- Co-facilitate with an experienced Facilitator to build confidence
- Read through the Facilitator manual and resources before facilitating, use post-it notes to add your thoughts and tips from other Facilitators
- Read through the Top Tips for Facilitators here:
<https://www.henry.org.uk/practitionerpages/toptips> and attend HENRY Delivery Support Sessions regularly to build knowledge and confidence

Challenge - No crèche, children in sessions

Solutions include:

- Low numbers of participants work well if no crèche is available and children have to attend; however, children tend to need a lot of attention during the sessions
- Some HENRY workshops may be less suitable for children to be present in (such as Fussy Eating or Understanding Children's Behaviour) due to parents often wanting to 'offload' and share frustrations etc
- Discuss with participants their plans for childcare before the programme starts
- Use a volunteer to look after the children in the sessions (they don't have to be HENRY trained)
- Offer online and/or evening programmes and workshops to eliminate the need for childcare

Challenge - Parents attending Preparation for Parenthood late in pregnancy and missing sessions

Solutions include:

- Discuss referral process with your Coordinator and recruitment route i.e. discuss with midwives, HVs etc and consider a 'cut-off' date for expectant parents to attend

Challenge - Keeping to your diary when parents are chopping and changing dates and times

Solutions include:

- Discuss with your line manager and / or Coordinator
- Use the HENRY approach and plenty of ESP with parents when discussion changes in appointments