



# DEVELOPING TOGETHER

SOCIAL WORK  
TEACHING PARTNERSHIP



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| Covid 19 - Celebrating Social Work Practice | Issue 2 | Date: 3.6.20 |

Dear reader,

Welcome to the second edition of our celebration of social work practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope you find the good news stories uplifting and the resources on policy, practice, research and wellbeing helpful.

Best wishes,  
Libbi, Sue, Josie and Sarah



# Examples of Excellent Practice

Achieving for Children (AfC) shared some examples of their super-colleagues - people who are doing really special work at the moment and going above and beyond.

### Eunice, Family Resilience Service:

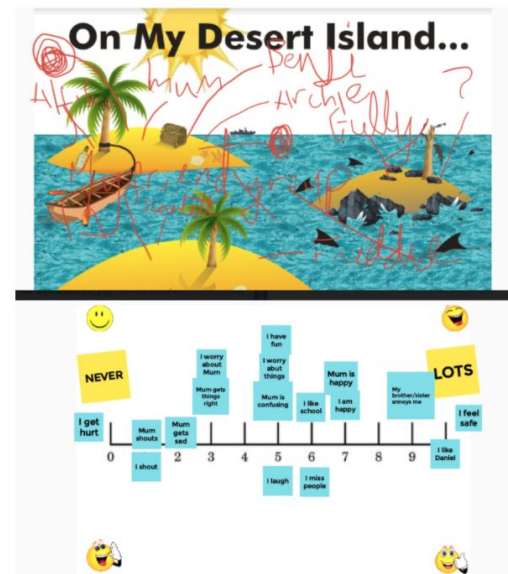
"Eunice has been supporting a single parent with three young children to complete a 1-1 parenting programme and give her strategies and tools to support and manage at times, challenging behaviours. This has been difficult for mum during lockdown due to being home alone with her children. Eunice has worked flexibly to have later evening sessions virtually once the children are in bed and has described how mum joins Google hangouts with her cuppa and her triple P book. Mum is reporting increased confidence in her parenting and more positive relationships with her children."

### Henry Kilpin, Head of Strategy and Programmes:

"A shout out to Henry for supporting colleagues across the organisation and for showcasing everything that AfC does to the world! Henry quietly and diligently makes sure work is completed to a high standard, on time and with little support. He has shone in particular in supporting Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead in implementing their new model of delivery for children's centres and youth centres, making sure that the change process follows the HR process and that staff are fully engaged in the process. He has also written the excellent Annual Report and Business Plan for 2019/20 which articulates AfC's successes and achievements to commissioners, councillors, funders and the public - vital in helping AfC continue as a company. Well done Henry!"

In addition, their Referral & Assessment team has put together a [Jamboard user guide](#). This is a practical guide to using the virtual Jamboard technology and includes examples of how it can be used to carry out direct work for an assessment, peer supervision, and personal supervision. Credit to Esme, Team Leader, and the team for putting this together. This really shows how we can be creative and innovative during these times.

Work examples: using a Jamboard for assessment



The traditional 'islands' technique was adapted for use with a Jamboard with a thirteen year old. A scaling tool was used to assess her views, wishes and feelings.

There may be an opportunity to learn from children - can we get their feedback at the end of direct work - how have you found this work? This could be a scaling question.

This direct work example was set up with an island to represent the child's space and various Lego characters. The child was able to move these characters around the board to represent his feelings and share his views.

Kingston Adult Social Care's case study illustrates beautifully how professionals can adapt their own practice during this crisis and enable those they work with:

Since June 2019 I have facilitated Kingston's Brain Injury Group. The group is an informal community group for anyone over the age of 18 with an acquired brain injury. Our usual activities include quizzes, cinema trips, cooking lessons, emotional and social support, bowling, brain training games, well-being courses, gardening, and day trips to farms, parks and museums. The group is usually run out of Sessions House, and in the community, every week on a Thursday.

During the COVID-19 pandemic the group have supported each other through the world of 'signal lagging' and 'technical difficulties' to become virtual. We now hold the group each Thursday via the marvel of google hangouts video chat. Some members of the group are currently shielding, and as such this has been their only access to the outside world. So far we have run brain training games, had a general knowledge quiz session, played online Pictionary, and one member of the group has even led a session on post traumatic growth and finding meaning through adversity.

I have found myself in admiration of the resilience shown by the group. I have learnt a great deal more about how positive peer support can relieve even the most unexpected of stresses. Members of the group have taken time in sessions to encourage each other to make lifestyle changes such as healthy eating, DIY around the home, developing new hobbies (for example learning to play the guitar, starting virtual cooking lessons with family, and a 26 mile static bike ride to raise money for Richmond Aid), and using relaxations techniques such as mindfulness and yoga. The group have also been excellent at championing local charities and support services. For every challenge that a member has been facing, another member of the group has been able to provide contact details for an agency that can support. In all honesty the best example of positive social work practice that I have seen has come from the group themselves! I believe that this experience has further enabled me to practice in a way that focuses on our services users as the experts of their own situations, through encouraging them to identify personal knowledge and skills.

We are hoping to welcome a new member to our group, and even though we won't be able to meet them in person for now, the group are already thinking of ways to welcome them, and provide them the full Brain Injury Group experience! So please, if you have anyone in mind that you think might benefit from the group please do refer them by contacting myself on 07712 697880 or at [amy-louise.friend@kingston.gov.uk](mailto:amy-louise.friend@kingston.gov.uk).

Sutton Children has shared this excellent case study of practice during COVID-19, which demonstrates how success can still be achieved and even improved upon:

## **Fostering Recruitment**

### Background

Fostering Recruitment in Sutton came back in-house in January 2019. We launched a new recruitment campaign in September 2019. There is significant need for more in-house placements for our children in care and we have a target to recruit 15 new placements for our children per Year.

### Risk/Impact of COVID-19

Given the lockdown following the COVID-19 outbreak, we were unable to carry out recruitment activity in our usual way i.e. information evenings, attendance at community events, initial visits to prospective carers home. Furthermore, Foster Care Fortnight was due to commence 11th May. This is usually the busiest two weeks of the fostering calendar for recruitment and there was a risk that a lack of activity during those two weeks would mean a dip in enquiries and applications.

### Actions taken to address risk

- Having an increased social media presence (going from 3 fostering posts a week to daily posts)
- Trialling YouTube Live Streams marketed on social media as Live Q&A sessions for those interested in fostering to ask questions and learn more
- Undertaking virtual initial home visits with applicants we have not yet met. We have been flexible to use platforms that suit the applicants whether that be Google Meet, Zoom, Whatsapp etc.
- Utilising current carers to support with content for FCF social media. Carers have sent lots of photos showing what they consider to represent fostering. This has increased our engagement with the public on social media
- Virtual assessment sessions, again being flexible and creative in how this is done to suit the need and preferences of our applicants
- Virtual panels so that new foster carers being approved are able to join and engage with panel discussion

### Achievements

- Seen continued interest and, particularly during Foster Care Fortnight, a rise in engagement and enquiries from previous months. We've received two applications to begin an assessment in the month of May and since lockdown have undertaken five initial visits.
- Engagement on social media has significantly increased which means our message is reaching more households and of those households more people are clicking on, liking and sharing our content.
- YouTube Lives have generated a much higher level of engagement, interest and attendance than our traditional open evenings held at a local hotel so we're hoping to carry this new way of working forward.
- Videos can also be saved and replayed, and we are planning to clip these to use as further social media content in future. Moving forward we plan to do monthly YouTube Lives with different guest speakers i.e. current carers, care leavers, foster carers birth children to ensure varied content.



# **COVID-19: Useful Resources**

# Resources for social work students and professionals



## **General reading:**

[Social Work 2020 under Covid-19 Magazine](#) - This is a free online magazine which will be produced during the Covid-19 crisis, edited by an editorial collective, about issues that are of interest to those who use social work or social care services, those who provide them and those who undertake teaching or research around them. This 3rd edition editorial was released on 18.5.20.

## **Recruitment:**

[NSPCC Guidance - Recruiting Safely during Coronavirus](#)

## **Managers:**

[Skills for Care Support for Registered Managers](#)

## **Virtual technology:**

[Virtual Whiteboard](#) - A user guide to Jamboard, kindly provided by Achieving for Children. Includes examples of how it can be used to carry out direct work for an assessment, peer supervision, and personal supervision.

## **Best Practice:**

[IP COVID-19 Case Studies Template](#) - A template for capturing examples of excellent practice during these unprecedented times; this could be adapted internally if necessary. Inspired by Sutton Children's template, thank you for sharing.

# Resources aimed at Children & Family practitioners



## **Communicating with children:**

[A coronavirus book for children](#)

[Article from Children's Commissioner - Children and stress: what's worrying them most](#)

## **Back to school:**

[A coronavirus back to school story](#)

[An alternative back to school story](#)

[Transitioning autistic children back to school after COVID-19](#)

## **Safeguarding:**

[CASPAR Newsletter](#) - Gives weekly updates from NSPCC on safeguarding/child protection

[NSPCC Guidance - Safeguarding during Coronavirus](#)

[NSPCC Briefing - Guidance for Social Workers](#) - Summarises guidance from across the UK to ensure that children are protected. Last updated 22 May.

[DfE Guidance - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#)

## **PCFSW Best Practice:**

[Ethical Response and Best Practice Guide](#)

[Risk Assessment and Prioritising Children and Families' Needs Best Practice Guide](#)

[Video Call and Virtual Home Visit Best Practice Guide](#)

## **Mental health:**

[Young Minds open letter to Government](#) - Together with over 30 organisations, Young Minds has written to the Government to tell them to limit the long-term impact of the pandemic on young people's mental health.

## **Children with disabilities**

[Family Fund Research](#) - The impact of COVID-19 on children with disabilities.



## Resources aimed at Adult and Mental Health practitioners



### **Recruitment:**

[Safe and fair recruitment guide](#) - COVID-19 supplement (May 2020)

[DHSC Recruitment Tool](#) - New tool launched to speed up social care recruitment.

### **Reading:**

[CQC Insight Document](#) - CQC publishes first insight document on COVID-19 pressures.

### **Guidance:**

[Government Guidance](#) - Coronavirus (COVID-19): provision of home care

### **Training:**

[Skills for Care and DHSC](#) - Essential training packages for new, existing and voluntary staff including suggested providers

### **Participating in research:**

[Survey from National Charity: In Control](#) - An Audit of Caregivers Wellbeing During the COVID-19 Pandemic in Ireland and the United Kingdom



Wellbeing, and ensuring you make time to look after yourself whilst working in a profession where you support others, has been a central theme of the Teaching Partnership (TP) with us holding several wellbeing events as well as our weekly #wellbeingwednesday top tip on Twitter. As part of this initiative the TP attended training by Karen Treisman - Clinical Psychologist - 'Trauma responses in lock down'. Karen spoke eloquently about the personal and professional impact COVID-19 has had upon us and the individual nature of the experiences, referring to us being in the same storm but each being in a different boat. This reconnected me to the poem which has been circulating 'We are not in the same boat' that you can read [here](#) which reminds us of people's varying experiences as we all navigate our way through the pandemic.

Social Workers have been on the frontline supporting individuals and families as they cope with the impact of the virus, whether they be an older person who has had covid and is needing to be discharged from hospital safely, a person with mental ill health who is needing support in the community, a child who is at risk of being sexually exploited online or a physically disabled person who is shielding and needs daily care. All of these situations require skilled, dedicated workers who are able to support the most vulnerable in our society. However this can come at a price and at these times when we are working in our own homes and our personal and professional lives begin to blur, more than ever we need to make time to ensure social workers are supported and have time to reflect and explore their experiences. To this end the TP is working with some of our partners to support social workers and social care staff through providing both individual and group reflective supervision and we know that across the Partnership additional support is being offered through similar forums and peer support groups. Another excellent resource is Community Care Informs [Developing emotional resilience and wellbeing: A practical guide for Social Workers](#) which provides both research and practical guidance to support social worker wellbeing. So the message remains; Be Kind to ourselves and Stay Safe.



## **Arts and creative activities:**

Create a [Covid-19 Time Capsule](#) using this handy template

[Art Activity Pack](#)

## **General wellbeing:**

A comprehensive and practical guide to [Lifting Up In Lock Down](#)

A blog by Siobhan Maclean on [Connecting Reflection And Resilience To Prevent 'Moral Injury'](#)

Community Care Inform - [Developing emotional resilience and wellbeing: A practical guide for Social Workers](#)

The Tavistock and Portman - [Guidance and Support for the Wellbeing of Adult Social Workers](#)

BASW - [Social Work Resources during the Coronavirus](#)

Red Cross - [14 day wellbeing kit](#)



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**Thank you for reading!**

If you have any good news stories, examples of excellent practice, or helpful resources that you'd like to share, please send these through to us at: [admin@developingtogetherswtp.org.uk](mailto:admin@developingtogetherswtp.org.uk)

We would also be grateful to receive comments or suggestions on the newsletter, including any topics you'd like to see covered in future editions.

**P.S.** The Association of Child Protection Professionals is still in need of submissions from practitioners and students about practice during the pandemic - you can find out more [here](#).

Please let us know if you decide to do this, as we'd love to publish them on the Developing Together [website](#) too!