



DEVELOPING TOGETHER

SOCIAL WORK TEACHING PARTNERSHIP

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Welcome to May's newsletter,

See inside for another jam-packed edition of all things social work and partnership working! From experiencing our first 'in-person' meeting as a team, to the difficult but moving Celebrating Black Voices event, to the exciting news about an extension to our government funding, we hope you enjoy finding out more about our recent activities and accomplishments.

Have a wonderful long weekend if you're lucky enough to have 3 days of rest, and for those who will be working, thank you and take care,

The TP Team

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Continuing Professional Development



We are very proud to report that we were asked by Social Work England to write a blog for them about the development and delivery of our Early Career Social Work Managers' Programme and this has now been published:

<https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/news/supporting-and-developing-our-manager-s-programme/>

We have now delivered the programme twice within our partnership and are currently extending the course to another regional social work teaching partnership.

We hope to deliver the course again in the Autumn and look forward to seeing some of you there!





Teaching Partnership Team Update

We were delighted to welcome Sharon Evans on board in April, the Teaching Partnership's new Practice Consultant. Sharon has been a social worker for 21 years and specialises in adoption and children with disabilities, including children and young people who have acquired brain injury through trauma. You can find out more about Sharon by reading her blog [here](#).



The whole team got together face to face on 21st May for the first time and we had such a fantastic day getting to know each other better and developing some exciting plans for the upcoming year. It was particularly valuable for the new members of the team who had never met in person and made us all reflect on the challenges students and new social workers have faced when going on placement or beginning working as a social worker for the first time. Seeing how tall or short each other were in 'real life' also gave us a good laugh!

We got 'crafty' and created a poster presentation illustrating our team vision which you can see on the left. Of course we finished our get together with a trip to a nearby pub garden and didn't let the gale force winds and heavy rain dampen our spirits!

Practice Consultant Update



I am Sharon Evans, the latest recruit to the Teaching Partnership Team. I will be working with Josie Newton to deliver Practice Education Workshops to support Practice Educators across the Partnership. As a Partnership, we are keen to develop the Community of Practice, which will support Practice Educators at all levels of experience. In this way we can reflect and learn from each other and create a community that shares knowledge, innovative ideas and supports each other to meet the challenges of supporting students to learn and be ready for practice, as well as celebrating successes.

Josie and I will be developing some new workshops to build on this so look out for new workshops in the coming year! We will also be setting up a monthly drop in group that will be a mixture of virtual and in person as the restrictions continue to ease. Look out for a flyer and come and join in.

We all know how important research is in relation to developing our practice and the Partnership is keen to support colleagues in this endeavour. I am in the process of setting up drop in sessions, a mixture of virtual and in person, to gain reflections on research and how we can develop this to support practice and learning. Look out for flyers in relation to this in the coming months. One thing I can promise is that when we are in person, I will be bringing home made cake. Cake eating always stimulates creativity, which I am hoping to tap into across the partnership.

I am looking forward meeting and working with you all!

Maria Brent, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Social Work and Social Care shared about the 2 events she delivered in May.

"I ran an online session for the TP on my Self-Neglect research on 12th May and over 60 enrolled to attend, I think over 40 attended live."
The session was an exploration of Social Workers' experiences of working with adults who self-neglect and an insight into cutting edge research with Kingston University Academic, Maria Brent. It presented the voices of social workers working in this complex area of practice and explore the challenges and approaches in supporting adults who self-neglect.

This interactive event allowed practitioners to engage with Maria's current research on the growing and complex area of self-neglect practice and considered the support needs of the person they are working with and how self-neglect impacts social workers themselves and their support needs going forward.

"Also, we had 180 live and another 400 enrolled to watch the recording of the 'Grandma Remember Me' Dementia Event on the 14th of May and a large proportion were from partner agencies in the TP."

This interactive free online learning was developed in collaboration with Kingston's Alzheimer's Society, Dementia Friendly Community Group and aimed to raise awareness of how best to support people and their families living with Dementia. It included speakers providing valuable insights into their experiences of supporting people living with Dementia during the last year and shared key learning for attendees to take away to develop their practice.

As part of this event, they were able to share the production of 'Grandma Remember Me' again. This is a powerful and moving story about a special relationship between a grandma and her granddaughter and explores the impact that Dementia can have within a family setting.

[The recording of this session is available to view on Kingston and St. George's Youtube channel.](#)

Kingston University Good News Stories

Dermot Brady (Senior Lecturer in Social Work), Jacqueline Harry (Senior Lecturer in Social Work) and Susan Watson (Associate Professor) from the Department of Social Work and Social Care shared the following about their Apprenticeship programme:

One of the best things in the last year for me and colleagues has been the BA (Hons) Social Work Integrated Degree Apprenticeship programme. Apprenticeships are available for a wide range of professions, and they all work in a similar way. Apprentices spend 80% of their time on the job with the remaining 20% dedicated to off the job learning. Employers with wage bills of over £3m are required to put 0.5 % in a compulsory apprenticeship levy fund and can only get this money back by investing in apprentice schemes. This means that employers usually invest in a range of apprenticeships, including social work apprenticeships. Kingston has been involved in discussions with employers about this for several years now and we entered into a competitive tendering process which resulted in us becoming the preferred provider across London. So much for the background.

Who are the apprentices? They are generally people who are working in both children and families and adult social care, sometimes for many years. There are a great many routes into social work these days, but the days when employers invested in Employment Based Routes (EBR) are mostly gone, although some employers do fund social work students in this way, including at Kingston. Our apprentices come from a number of London boroughs and services of different types. This means they have a wealth of experience which they draw on and bring to everything they do with us. The apprentice route gives them an option that they have not had up to now and they are taking full advantage of it! While there are always going to be difficulties in managing work/study/life, their commitment to the programme has been inspiring.

All social work training is going to have some elements in common, but there are some noteworthy differences in how this programme is structured. Firstly, it has been developed in collaboration with employers from the start. This means we have to work together on every aspect, from recruitment to curriculum design and the involvement of people with lived experience. That is a lot of meetings, task and finish groups and producing documents. We all wanted to avoid replicating existing programmes and started with a blank slate - although some elements of social work training are always going to be similar. Some elements of the programme are of course dictated by the various standards we have to comply with - the University's own validation process, Social Work England standards for course providers, the Institute for Employment and Enterprise standards and of course the PCF. This is complex but interesting work.

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What has stood out for the teaching team is the way our first cohort of apprentices actively participate and support each other. Students do of course engage with teaching staff in a whole range of ways, but in this last academic year the levels of engagement have been really inspiring. There are obviously the usual University arrangements about student voice meetings and similar things, but on this course the feedback loop is permanently open and on. We also noticed the apprentices setting up their own support mechanism, from WhatsApp groups to informal support. Another example - when we were just toying with the idea of the current cohort supporting their colleagues who will be arriving next year, the apprentices already had an outline plan for this. This all makes for really interesting learning and teaching on and off the job and to have achieved as much as they have during the past somewhat strange year is a testament to their resilience, maturity and the level of care and attention they bring to the course. It has been the brightest light in the sometimes not quite so illuminated 20/21 academic year.

Yvalia Febrer, Course Leader for BA (Hons) Working With Children & Young People: Social Pedagogy shared this about first year students:

"From January to March this year, first year students on the BA (Hons) Working With Children & Young People: Social Pedagogy course worked closely with Kingston University's Hack Centre and Achieving for Children's Youth Work Lead (North East Cluster), Ben Skelton, to design a state-of-the-art Gaming Suite for Ham Youth Centre. Students worked in small groups to design not only the room and equipment itself, but the gaming activities offered for young people. The collaboration involved Kingston University's HackCentre, a multi-disciplinary centre offering organisations access to the problem-solving capacity of the University's innovative students and expert academics. The Social Pedagogy Students used values-based thinking from the Social Pedagogy Professional Association <https://sppa-uk.org/> to inform their designs and plans, considering safeguarding and inclusivity for young people. Achieving for Children also takes Social Pedagogy students on practice learning placements at Ham Youth Centre, and in other teams across the organisation."



Teaching Partnership Highlights

Please see below a round up of a few key updates and achievements!

- Kingston University students on the undergraduate social work course have been given the opportunity to apply for a Student Internship with some of our partner agencies - successful students will undertake both practice placements with their preferred agency and will be interviewed for an Newly Qualified Social Worker position upon completion of their course
- We have recently opened up recruitment for more Teaching Consultants (TCs). TCs are practitioners with responsibility for statutory social work who teach on the qualifying social work programmes at Kingston University. They also contribute to research in their area of expertise and support with the recruitment of students onto the courses. Find out more [here](#).
- We are delighted to publish our latest annual progress report - you can read the full report in black and white [here](#) and a colourful headline messages report [here](#).
- We are very excited to report that the Department for Education (DfE) has recently announced that they will be funding the national social work teaching partnership programme for a further year. This new funding allows us to continue 'as is' until end March 2023 and put into action lots of the ambitions we discussed at our annual Visioning Day event with our Strategic Board on 29th April.
- Wayne Reid, BASW England Professional Officer, Social Worker & Anti-racism Visionary, has published his [report mapping anti-racism activities across the country](#). We are pleased to have been featured in the report, along with a number of our partner agencies who also made submissions.
- On 18th June we are looking forward to launching 2 new frameworks linked to CPD that are being piloted by a number of agencies in our TP:
 - Early Professional Development Framework
 - Career Pathways & CPD Framework
- Over the last few months we have also been developing a new Strengths Based Practice course aimed at social workers in Adult Social Care - this was a collaboration between Kingston University, Merton Adults and Kingston Adults but is also open to staff working in Croydon Adults and Sutton Adults. The first cohort kicks off in July.



Learning and Development Report 2020-21 Highlights

The Teaching Partnership has put together its first Annual Learning and Development (L&D) report for the previous year of training and events! A number of highlights came from this analysis, including the following:

- Overall, 2235 bookings were made for the provision across the year, and the average attendance rate was 59.37%.
- The most popular courses throughout the year were:
 - CPD Reflective Writing Workshop
 - BASW: Anti-Racism in Social Work with Wayne Reid
 - Engaging Children & Adults when Working Virtually or Online
- Two courses have been submitted and approved for accreditation with The CPD Standards Office (CPDSO):
 - The Early Career Managers' (ECM) Programme
 - Enabling Reflective Practice
- Evaluation feedback for the events has been very positive!
 - 100% rated the facilitators' knowledge as "Good"/"Excellent"
 - 93.82% rated the sessions as "Extremely Helpful"/"Helpful"
 - 93.39% rated sessions as having "Fully met"/"Exceeded" expectations.
- The most visited resource from the website over the year was the 'The Professional Capabilities Framework Toolkit', a mixture of worksheets, exercises and discussion tools that PEs can use with their students on placement. The most popular recorded session accessed, by far, is the recording of 'BASW: Anti-Racism in Social Work with Wayne Reid - September 2020', with 552 views.

The TP team plans to continue working closely with partners to identify learning needs in the future!

Some quotes from colleagues who have attended our training!

"Excellent, really useful training session that has helped to ease some anxieties by providing me with ideas regarding managing a placement during Covid-19 times, thank you!" - PE Workshop: How to be a PE in a Virtual Placement, 14/07/2020

"The workshops have been instrumental to my own development as a Manager. I am grateful to the Teaching Partnership for the accessibility, and participatory nature of these workshops." - ASYE Assessor Workshop: Reflective Supervision, 01/12/2020

"This course was invaluable and i will be telling all my colleagues to sign up for the next one. Fantastic , well presented and very factual and precise for those families living with a violent child. Thank you so much" - Child to Parent Violence Training, 26/02/2021



Reflections on the Practice Education Conference 2021

This month we enjoyed attending the virtual Practice Education Conference, a series of events over the week of 17-21 May to celebrate the work of all those engaged in developing social work learners and to explore their contributions to building learning communities. Even though we were not able to attend in person it was stimulating to come together as a community of practice, share ideas and hear from some truly inspirational speakers.

Dale Van Graan and Natalie Tavares shared their reflections and learning for practice in how they worked together to develop a training programme for social work students based in Gibraltar. Natalie and Dale reflected on how much they had both benefited from the experience of working together on this project. They shared how their relationship developed and changed as they both learned from each other over the 2 year project. The learning they shared could be transferred to any learning setting. Natalie reflected on how the issue of power dynamics were explored by both her and her students in her role. Dale commented that she felt that this project was "experiential learning in its true sense". The community of practice that has developed as a result of their collaborative learning experience is one that we will definitely endeavour to emulate within the Teaching Partnership.

Catherine Pestano presented two sessions, one about being a Creative Practice Educator and using therapeutic tools to support student learning. The other session focused on Compassionate Mindfulness to support resilience and good mental health. Both these sessions were really useful in thinking about supporting students through placements through modeling positive action in supporting good mental health. Sharon Evans, TP Practice Consultant said, 'As a children's social worker I have always used tools to facilitate communication with children and building positive relationships. For me using these tools with students will be something I will take forward in the future.'

Prospera Tedam presented a powerful reflection on the research she has undertaken in relation to oppressive and racist practice that some Black social work students experience during their placements. We all know her work in relation to the Mandela Model and she has recently updated this model to include a chapter on practice as a Practice Educator. Her session promoted a lot of reflections and commitment to change.

Carol Dicken from Kingston University presented an interactive session to promote learning on how to assess students against the Social Work England Practice Standards. The Teaching Partnership will be mapping these standards against every Practice Educator Workshop going forward to build on the learning that Carol presented at the conference.

Thank you to all our great speakers for making our Practice Education Conference such a success!



Celebrating Black Voices: In Memory of George Floyd

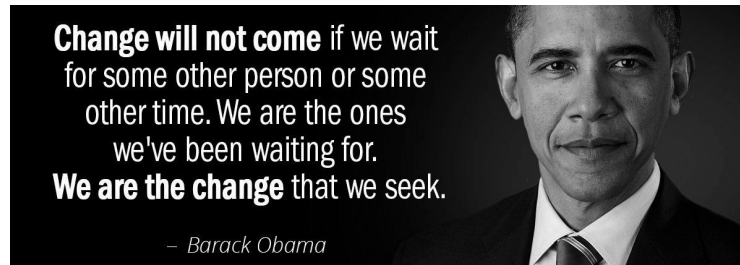
One year on from the tragic murder of George Floyd, the Teaching Partnership team felt it was important to do something to not only acknowledge the events of the last year, but also to have a space for celebration of black voices.

The event on 28 May was planned to be a drop-in reflective space, where colleagues could come and listen, or actively participate by sharing their thoughts and experiences. This was supported by a rolling slideshow of powerful quotes and videos from prominent black voices.

It was an amazing privilege to be part of this event and be with colleagues, albeit virtually, and share in a celebration of achievements by black members of the community. This event was powerful and moving as we reflected together about achievement and action that we will take together to make a difference in the future.

Thank you to everyone who attended and participated in this event. Together we will make a difference.

A full post on the event, including summarised/anonymised reflections and comments from attendees, the video presentation, the wonderful [piece of music](#) that one of our attendees had written that was spontaneously played, as well as all links and resources discussed will be collated and shared in the coming week on our [website](#)!



Mental Health Awareness Week 10th-16th May 2021



'There is something to be wondered at in all of Nature' - Aristotle

Mental Health Awareness week took place between 10-16 May 2021, with this year's theme being nature and the environment. During long months of lockdown, many of us turned to nature as a form of escapism. The Mental Health Foundation's research on the mental health impacts of the pandemic demonstrated that going for walks was one of the most popular coping strategies and is encouraging more people to continue to connect with nature in new ways.

Whilst it is vital to raise awareness in this dedicated week, it is also important to look after our mental health and that of others, every day. This has never been more crucial than during these unprecedented times, living amidst a pandemic and coping with the associated stresses. During this pandemic, millions have experienced a mental health problem, or seen a loved one struggle. For many of us, our usual support systems and daily distractions were taken away and whilst we are slowly starting to come back to some form of normality, there will inevitably be lasting effects, seen long after this ends.

We spend most of our time at work and our working environment can have a significant impact on our mental health and wellbeing and ultimately, our ability to perform well in our job. At the Teaching Partnership, we recognise that Social Work is an incredibly challenging profession and are committed to ensuring that our workforce is healthy, happy and feels supported to deal with the diverse challenges of frontline practice with children and adults.

Please see our dedicated [wellbeing hub](#) for more information on a variety of issues that you might need support with, and to access our signposting links and other helpful resources.



For more information on how to support your mental health, please visit:
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/your-mental-health>

If you are concerned about your mental or emotional state, or you're worried about someone you know - help is available. Please [click here](#) for some more information about where to access help.



Research in Practice is an organisation that brings together academic research, practice expertise and the experiences of people accessing services. We have been working with them to collate some of their open-access resources, which do not require membership to access!

Blogs

- [Emotional reparation for social work education](#): this looks at race and diversity within education, and what could be done to change relations.
- [Peer practice specialists](#): written by Cafcass about an innovative way to reflect on practice, particularly in complex or unusual situations
- [Building a parent-led movement for families affected by child welfare](#): a co-produced resource to improve family-led decision-making
- [Care-experienced students: understanding their journeys through care](#) from the University of Sheffield

Open access or free virtual events

- On 20th July there is an event from the Open University asking the question: [Is young people's caring gendered?](#)
- ['In and after care proceedings: using local data to identify trends and influence policy and practice'](#). This open access webinar will explain how Children's Services and partner agencies can work together to understand their local data on care proceedings and the family stories that lie behind the statistics. *Places are given on a first-come, first-served basis.*



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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

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.