

Evaluating social pedagogy training and development in Lincolnshire

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Executive summary

This report presents the findings and recommendations from an evaluation of social pedagogy training and implementation in residential homes in Lincolnshire. The social pedagogy training delivered by Jacaranda training in Spring 2015 was completed by 45 members of staff from three care homes in Lincolnshire (Albion Street, Eastgate and Northolme) as well as stakeholders such as social workers, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and youth offending team (YOTS) members and reviewing officers. Two new members of staff were employed to help staff to embed the social pedagogy approach within their practice. In addition, each residential care home has designated two social pedagogy champions from their staff to engage in regular steering sessions with all three residential homes and management. Lincolnshire County Council want to understand the impact of the social pedagogy training and provision on the experiences of young people, staff and stakeholder organisations.

The social pedagogy approach is widely practiced by social work professionals in mainland Europe and has gained in popularity within the United Kingdom. In particular social pedagogy has been suggested as one way to create a holistic support system for a child's development (Petrie, *et al.*, 2005). Kyriacou *et al.* (2009, 75) describe social pedagogy as referring

'to actions on the part of adults to promote the personal development, social education and general well-being of the child alongside or in place of parents in a range of educational and social care settings (e.g. pre-school play groups, residential care homes, youth clubs)' (Kyriacou et al 2009: 75).

The evaluation consisted of a literature review, secondary data analysis, a survey of staff that took part in the training, interviews with staff and focus groups with young people.

Key Findings

Findings from the survey conducted in April 2015 suggested that staff enjoyed the training (91%) and that it met their expectations (86%). Staff identified that they learned a lot from the training including different social pedagogy models and incorporating them into practice, the importance of long-term relationship building with young people, confidence building and team-work, the importance of promoting positive and managed risk taking, self-reflection for both staff and young people as well as ways to improve communication. In addition staff reported they were more aware of the:

- needs of young people,
- importance of advocating for young people, and
- importance of enabling young people to address their own welfare.

Survey responses suggested that staff were more likely to be proactive at work (83%) and 74% stated they had a more positive approach to work as a result of the training. Evidence collected from interviews nine months after the training suggests that the training is resulting in a positive culture change at work. This is largely due to staff having had more time to experiment and embed the new approaches in their

practice. The staff agreed that the training had empowered and enabled them to be more confident and able to build and maintain more effective working-relationships with both staff and young people. The home managers also confirmed that the training had focused the staff to be more pro-active in planning work and engaging with the residents. Some of the young people also observed that the staff were now more pro-active in engaging with them in carrying out joint activities more often than in the past. One of the biggest changes to the way in which staff operated was in the recording of their activities with young people. This has had a number of very positive effects for example staff reported allowing themselves more time to reflect on their practice and to record what worked. The recording of activities is in turn beginning to build up a useful resource for other staff to share and develop.

Throughout the research, staff reported an increased confidence in their day to day activities. This was attributed to a newly gained sense of 'professionalism' which had resulted from the training. Staff reported feeling that they have a body of theory which explains their practice and that they can relate this to others. Staff reported that this made them feel more confident in talking to colleagues from other organisations and some reported that staff in partner organisations had noticed this and had asked about the possibilities of undertaking training in social pedagogy themselves.

Staff unanimously remained enthusiastic about the training however the implementation of social pedagogy has not been without challenges. The research notes the importance of strategic managers' and home managers' engagement and support as being paramount in successfully embedding social pedagogy. The participants suggested that if this was going to be an initiative which was sustained then all staff should have a practical awareness of social pedagogy.

A small number of staff reported that the training in social pedagogy has had an impact on their personal and social development. Some reported that they used social pedagogy techniques to reflect on their personal communication skills and relationships.

Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged as a result of the evaluation research:

Recommendation 1: Review and develop the training in social pedagogy

Research participants made a number of suggestions for developing the training in social pedagogy. These suggestions are all aimed at developing the staff confidence and expertise for all individuals working in children's services so that a more coherent and consistent approach is taken by all those working with young people in residential care. These include

- using social pedagogy as part of induction programmes,
- providing regular updates on social pedagogy activities,
- providing accredited training for some individuals, and
- making social pedagogy training available to a wider range of external stakeholders.

Recommendation 2: Review succession planning for social pedagogy champions and specialists

The staff involved in the research demonstrated a genuine interest and commitment to using social pedagogy in their practice. This was evidenced through the number of staff who had expressed an interest in becoming a social pedagogy champion. The over-subscription for this role suggests that Lincolnshire County Council managers should review their succession planning to ensure that the motivation of the talent pool is maintained and used to implement this approach across the county in other ways.

Recommendation 3: Articulate the levels commitment to social pedagogy at management level.

In order for the social pedagogy approach to truly become embedded in each residential home it must be seen to be embraced and enforced at both senior management and house management level. This will provide the support to the social pedagogues and to those members of staff that are enthusiastically using the approach with young people. Some ways in which this could be done could be by ensuring that all managers and strategic leaders undertake the training.

Recommendation 4: Continue to employ and empower social pedagogues.

Evidence from the literature suggests that the skill and confidence of social pedagogues in the residential home is important. Feedback from staff at the interviews suggested that the social pedagogues are important to ensure the sustainability of social pedagogy in residential homes.

Recommendation 5: Continue to train new staff in social pedagogy. All new staff should be trained in the social pedagogy approach in order to ensure its sustainability.

Recommendation 6: Encourage champions to empower and mentor other staff.

It was clear from the stakeholder interviews that several members of staff were enthusiastic about the social pedagogy approach. They can be encouraged further by identifying social pedagogy champions to work alongside social pedagogues to mentor other staff to embed social pedagogy in their practice.

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of research commissioned by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) which evaluates the outcomes of their social pedagogy training and provision. The social pedagogy training delivered by Jacaranda Training in April 2015 was completed by 45 members of staff from three care homes in Lincolnshire (Albion Street, Eastgate and Northolme) as well as stakeholders such as social workers, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and youth offending team (YOTS) members and reviewing officers. Two new members of staff were employed to help staff to embed the social pedagogy approach within their practice. In addition, each residential care home has designated two social pedagogy champions from their staff to engage in regular steering sessions with all three residential homes and management. LCC want to understand the impact of the social pedagogy training and provision on the experiences of the residents and staff in the associated children's homes and staff from external stakeholder organisations.

The research sought to answer the following questions with staff.

- How has social pedagogy training affected their approach to practice?
- How has social pedagogy training affected their experiences of work?
- How has social pedagogy training impacted on their own personal and social development?

The research sought to answer these research questions for young people.

- How has the SP training and developments affected their experience of residential care?
- How has the SP training and developments impacted on young peoples' personal educational and social development?

A mixed- methods approach was used to answer these evaluation questions including

- a literature review,
- secondary data analysis,
- online survey,
- interviews with staff, and
- focus groups with young people one of which took place in a central location and 3 of which took place in care homes.

About the Social Pedagogy training

The training was delivered to three cohorts of staff and managers from three residential care homes during February, March and April 2015. In addition to the residential care staff, a number of other practitioners attended including two educational psychologists from the children and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS), and a number of social workers.

The aim of the programme was to broaden and develop the knowledge and skills of participants in the field of social pedagogy including

- the basic principles and development of social pedagogic theory,
- the potential of social pedagogy within the current regulatory context,
- the skills to support decision making,
- the skills to design activities based on social pedagogical principles, and
- the skills to communicate effectively with children, families, and colleagues.

Further to this, the training focused on participant's ability to reflect on their practice and training and development needs.

The programme used a variety of learning styles to meet the learning requirements of the participants.

About the care homes involved in the training.

The social pedagogy training was provided to staff in three care homes in Lincolnshire. Each of the homes in the study has residents with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or mild learning disabilities. The overall aim of the homes is to provide a safe, nurturing, caring and homely environment for each child, where issues and concerns affecting both their past and their future can be positively addressed and supported. The ethos of the home is founded in principles which promote the development of meaningful relationships between staff and residents based on the core values of mutual respect and good parenting, respectful to the values of privacy, dignity, independence, choice, rights and fulfilment. Brief details of each of the homes are provided below.

- **Eastgate** is in Sleaford and has 6 residents between the ages of 9 years and 17 years.
- **Northolme** is Gainsborough and has 6 residents between the ages of 10 and 17.
- **Albion Street** is in Spalding and has 6 residents between the ages of 10 and 17.

Each home has a distinctive atmosphere and culture determined by the staff and residents. Two of the three homes have relatively stable populations however Albion Street has experienced a number of changes in staff and residents over the last year which has had an impact on the speed at which the social pedagogy has been implemented.

2. Social pedagogy in residential care

Lyons & Hueglar (2011) define social pedagogy as an element of education that includes informal learning processes that contribute to human development. Petrie *et al.* (2006) describe it as '*education in its broadest sense*' and '*bringing up" children in a way that addresses the whole child*'. Kyriacou *et al.* (2009, 75) describe social pedagogy as referring

'to actions on the part of adults which promote the personal development, social education and general well-being of the child alongside or in place of parents in a range of educational and social care settings (e.g. pre-school play groups, residential care homes, youth clubs)' (Kyriacou 2009:75).

Berridge *et al.* (2011) note that researchers from a European tradition indicate that social pedagogy is not an approach or profession or a set of techniques that can be easily learnt but a perspective that pervades all areas of practice involving the welfare of children.

Boddy & Statham (2009) concluded that social pedagogy contains four elements:

- **an academic discipline**, studied to higher degree level and beyond within universities,
- **a professional qualification**, usually to Bachelors-degree level, and based on at least three years of full-time study (incorporating practice placements),
- **a field for professional practice** in the children's workforce, both in mainstream services and in child and family welfare, and
- **a conceptual basis for policy** for children and families.

The social pedagogy approach is widely practiced by social work professionals in mainland Europe and has gained in popularity within the United Kingdom. Social pedagogy was initially conceptualised as a way to use education to approach social problems (Hämäläinen, 2003). In particular social pedagogy has been suggested as one way to create a holistic support system for a child's development (Petrie, *et al.*, 2005). Social pedagogy seeks to address issues that arise within the whole child including their body, mind, spirit and feelings.

There is a strong tradition of social pedagogy across Europe and further abroad. Eight countries including Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Spain use the term social pedagogue (or its translated equivalent) as a professional title with formal training. In a cross-cultural study of Denmark and Germany it was found that in Denmark qualified social pedagogues comprised about 60% of the workforce and education service for preschool aged children and almost all staff working in residential care (Cameron, 2004).

Social pedagogy as an approach is increasingly used to support young people in residential care homes in the United Kingdom. The report *Every Child Matters* (2003) has prompted new approaches to supporting the most vulnerable children. Petrie, *et al.* (2005) suggest several ways in which social pedagogy can serve aspects of public policy. Social pedagogy:

- creates of an inclusive and normalising approach for children,
- refocuses attention on the child rather than the procedure,
- promotes understanding of the child both as an individual and as a part of a group,
- proves opportunities to engage children in activities that enhance their self-esteem, and
- deepens respect for children as human beings (Petrie, *et al.*, 2005).

Chavaudra, *et al.* (2014) suggest that there is an increasing interest in workforce development programmes in social pedagogy. Moore *et al* (2013) conducted a scoping project for Derbyshire County Council targeted at staff working with looked-after children. They assessed current competencies and training needs of staff with regard to social pedagogy in order to make recommendations on potential training and continuing professional development. They found that there was genuine interest and commitment to developing skills in social pedagogy. They described four key features that training in social pedagogy should have. This includes

- the engagement of all staff,
- opportunities for progression,
- accreditation where appropriate, and
- a wide span of learning levels from foundation level learning through to undergraduate level.

To date there are few evaluations of embedding the social pedagogy approach in residential care homes in the United Kingdom. In 2010 the Department for Education (DfE) funded an evaluation of 30 residential care home sites in which social pedagogues from mainland Europe were recruited. In the final report of the implementation of social pedagogy pilot in care homes in the UK, Cameron, *et al.* (2011) identified some of the features that made working with social pedagogy more successful.

- Experience, confidence and skills of social pedagogues, ideally working with social pedagogic colleagues (i.e. not being the sole social pedagogue in a workplace).
- Knowledge of social pedagogy among management at all levels and willingness to learn and be challenged.
- Wider support from employer organisation and willingness to invest own resources into training, networking, thinking and reflection.
- Not being wedded to own philosophy to the point of exclusion of other ways of thinking.
- Taking a critical view of regulations and procedures, asking how they address the best interests of young people.
- Stability of managerial and the staff team, with commitment to debate and reflect and to work with uncertainty as a positive. (Cameron, *et al.*, 2011)

3. Evaluation methodology

This section describes the mixed methods research approach used to undertake the evaluation. This approach was adopted after discussion with LCC as the most appropriate approach to answer the research questions which concerned impacts on both young people and staff. The next sections describe each phase of the research in more detail.

Literature review

A brief desktop review was undertaken to provide context for the research. The review explored the extent in the use of social pedagogy models across Europe and the impact of this approach on staff and young people. A summary of the review is contained in section 2 of this report. A full list of references can be found in section 10.

Staff survey

An online survey was developed and disseminated to all staff that participated in the training. The survey was designed to measure changes in aspects of personal and professional development after training completion. The survey can be found in Appendix 3. The survey included questions about:

- changes in approaches to practice,
- embedding social pedagogy in work, and
- influence of training on personal and social development.

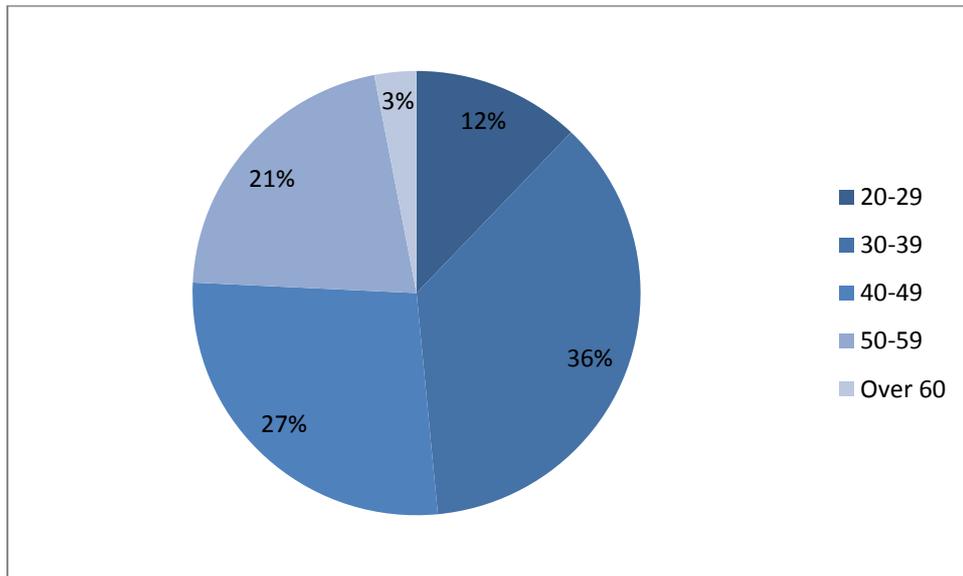
The survey opened on 21 May 2015 and remained available for approximately three weeks. In total, 78% of those eligible to complete the survey did so (37 out of a possible 45) which is a very high response rate. Initial examination of the data led to the exclusion of two cases on the grounds that less than 80% of the survey was completed. This left a total of 35 valid survey responses.

Demographics

Respondents to the survey were asked to report their gender, age, highest qualification and the care home in which they worked. The respondents were predominantly female with thirty respondents (86%) and five respondents (14%) were male.

Thirty-three respondents answered questions about their age. The age of respondents were varied however the largest proportion of staff (36%) who answered the survey were aged 30-39. Three percent (3%) of staff were 60 or older.

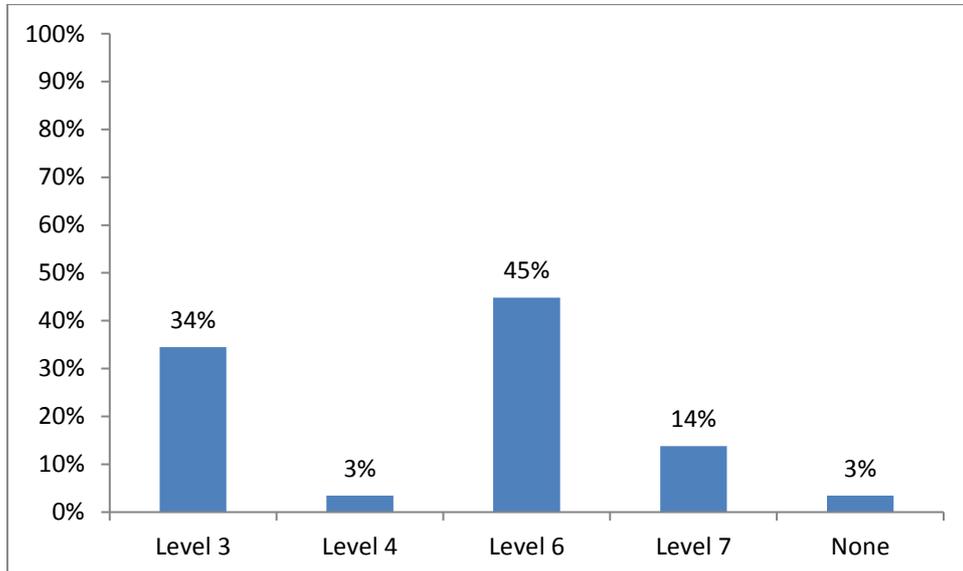
Figure 1: Age of respondent



(n=33)

Twenty-nine respondents provided information on their highest qualification level. Almost half (45%) of held a relevant level 6 qualification (This equates to the level required for a final year at university) while one-third (34%) of respondents were qualified at level 3 (Equivalent to A' levels).

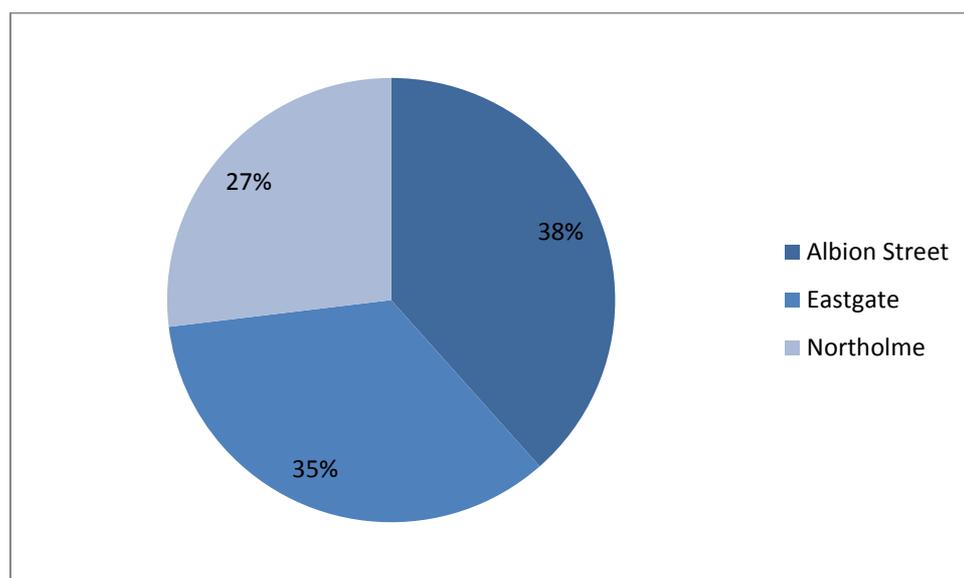
Figure 2: Qualification level of respondent



(n=29)

Twenty-six respondents reported in which care home they worked. There was a mix of respondents from all three care homes however the largest proportion came from Albion Street (38%).

Figure 3: Residential care home of respondent



(n=26)

Stakeholder interviews

Fourteen interviews were conducted with staff over two phases. The first was on 18 September 2015 when seven stakeholder interviews were conducted in Lincoln The second phase on 5th and 8th April 2016 when seven staff were interviewed in the care homes in which they worked. The two phase of interviews have helped the research team to develop insights into the impact of the training soon after the training and once the training had had time to be embedded into practice. Table 1 below shows the numbers of staff who were involved in the research by home.

Table 1: Staff research participation

Date	Eastgate	Northholme	Albion Street
September 2015	3	2	2
April 2016	4	1	2
Total staff interviewed	7	3	4

The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix 1) and analysed thematically.

Focus groups with young people

Twelve young people were interviewed in focus group discussions on two separate occasions (One in a central location on September 18th 2015 and three in care homes on 5th and 8th April 2016). The discussions included two young people from Albion Street, three young people from Eastgate, and four young people from Northholme.

The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix 2) and analysed thematically.

4. Staff experiences of social pedagogy training

94% of survey respondents agreed they would recommend social pedagogy training to friends and colleagues.

This section deals with the reaction of staff to the training and the impact it has had particularly the extent to which it has changed their approach to practice, their experience of work and their personal and social development.

What defines 'good training'?

In general staff enjoyed the training sessions and reported that it met their expectations with survey respondents indicating that 91% enjoyed the training and 86% saying that it met their expectations. One staff member was so enthusiastic about the programme she stated,

"[the training] surpassed [my expectations] we're still using it now and we've really integrated it into our daily practice so it's by far surpassed any training I've done with our children."

Care home staff member



Staff interviewed as part of the research were unanimous in their views that successful training was motivating, interactive and left staff with a sense of purpose. Features of successful training were that it should

- include opportunities for practice development,
- create a challenging but supportive environment,
- renew staff energy,
- provide new knowledge that can be implemented,
- be implemented, and
- should result in positive outcomes for staff and young people.

The following quotations from staff members support these views

'I would define successful training as something that we can bring back to our home and use on a daily basis with the children. Something that gets the staff team motivated and whilst on the training, keeps us interested throughout the day. A lot of our trainee courses are all about people standing and just talking at you and you forget half of it. But when you go home and you're still thinking

about things and you're thinking about things for the next course, I would say that's very successful'.

Staff interview participant

'Since social pedagogy is not just about the young people – it is equally – about the staff, successful training would be one that creates an environment where everyone has a set of benefits, responsibilities, boundaries and everyone commits to striving toward achieving the final outcome that is the wellbeing of young people. And empowers everyone to execute their responsibilities with confidence and exercise their rights with knowledge.'

Staff interview participant

Meeting expectations

The research indicates that the training largely met and in most cases surpassed staff expectations. One manager noted that staff had been a little nervous before the training but soon became more confident as the sessions progressed.

People were anxious about the training. They were worried and uncomfortable if the training would be more complicated. After a few sessions, you could see people using the models. What the staff wanted was more practical training – this is because before they were using 1 particular model. Now, there were many models over 6 days. When we came back from the training sessions, they made us do too many things.

Manager

The interview participants stated that the training was highly motivating and that they enjoyed undertaking the training with a mixed group of colleagues from a variety of care homes and roles. Those interviewed frequently mentioned they left the training days “buzzing” and excited about this approach to working with young people. One respondent was particularly excited about the relevance of social pedagogy to residential care, *“A lot of our courses tailor toward social workers and don't usually fit residential...but so many of the models the whole emphasis of positive risk taking the bringing it back to the children to empower them....it reinforced that and gave us more ways to do it.”* Another staff member who had for the first time participated in a social pedagogy training stated that the training was *“good, in-depth, intensive and comprehensive and more practice-oriented in a sense that it engaged in actual and practical activities that not all trainings would normally do. It gave us extra benefit and knowledge on our approach to our work that makes us more confident to engage the young people in a wider range of activities.”*

Participants key learning from the training

Staff were asked to reflect on what they had learned from the training. Most survey respondents listed working models of social pedagogy and self-development such as

the common third¹, johari's window² and the 3Ps³ as the top three most important things which they had learned. These types of models were mentioned 29 times by the 33 survey respondents that answered this question. Overall, the list of the top three most important things learned during training included

- social pedagogy and self development models (29 times),
- long-term relationship building (9 times),
- incorporating social pedagogy into practice (8 times),
- promoting positive risk taking (8 times),
- self reflection and reflective tools (5 times), and
- better communication (4 times).

Other themes which were mentioned less frequently included : shared terminology, history of social pedagogy, better planning, importance of evaluation, shared and common goal setting, self awareness, better awareness of the young person, reinforcement of current practice and team building.

A home manager said that *“the biggest learning has been about engaging the kids – stepping back. As professionals we want to be in control. This encourages us to let our guard down a bit. It is good for relationships. It really inspires you. It makes you want to do more.”* A member of staff expressed her learning experience in a similar way, stating that *“It has given staff a language e.g. ‘positive risk taking’. Life is all about positive risk-taking. The young people in residential care houses should have the same amount of positive risk taking as a young person in a normal family.”*

Research participants also indicated other impacts of the training to be

- record keeping and holistic learning approach,
- confidence and risk taking, and
- team work and relationship building.

Keeping records

For some, keeping records of the social pedagogy work they do with young people was an important learning outcome. One interview participant stated that an important message for her was to *“record and evidence what I’ve done because quite often you can go to work and do some great pieces of work but won’t necessarily record that. So for me it would be to record and use specific models of work be able to identify what we used...and most importantly, it is about enjoying it with the children.”* This finding was corroborated by a home manager who also suggested that *‘Ofsted inspectors have now been able to collate more evidence. This has become an ‘on the shelf’ evidence book. This has been part of the contribution to us getting ‘outstanding’.*

Confidence

Throughout the research, staff explained that the training had resulted in increased confidence. One of the interview participants suggested that confidence was gained

¹ See http://www.thempra.org.uk/concepts_c3.htm

² See <http://www.open.edu/openlearn/education/learning-change/content-section-3.2.4>

³ http://www.thempra.org.uk/concepts_3p.htm

because the training *“gave staff a framework to organise their work.”* Another participant suggested that the training reinforced their position as professionals making them more confident in the work they were doing and how to move forward. Improved staff confidence extends to the young people and influences their relationships with their carers. A 15-year old young person stated that *“when I want something changed, I talk to a member of staff. I feel confident that the staff would listen to me and value my ideas.”*

Team work

Some interview participants noted that there is a renewed focus on team work as a result of the training. This includes teamwork among staff and young people as well as external relationships with social workers, parents and other agencies. One respondent discussed the improvement in teamwork, *“the team are working a lot better together, we’re all talking about what we’ve done and how we’ve done it and how the child reacted...a social pedagogy board is now up in the office and we’re able to print out pictures of tasks we’ve done and give examples of what we’ve been doing.”* One house manager noted that the training had enhanced the culture of team-work and led to the team meetings becoming far more interactive. *‘Now, all staff have the confidence and the aptitudes to work together and as a team. It has given the staff the leadership skills and it does not have to the most experienced persons to lead and manage, it can be all staff members to lead and manage activities.’*

The place of social pedagogy training in initial and continuous professional development

85% of survey respondents agreed that all staff should be trained in social pedagogy.

A measure of the extent of managers support for social pedagogy can be seen in their use of social pedagogy in new induction programmes for staff and for student placements.

Some other participants suggested changes in the of social pedagogy training. One member of staff stated *“I would put in more refrehsers to help embed this rather than approaching it as a one-off attempt. Things consistently change and so do the young people, and we need to reflect and refresh our approaches. This needs to happen more often – say monthly – every two months. I would want to take it to the next level that is more practical”.*

Throughout the research there has been a consistent message that whilst the training which staff received was very positive and had impact there was a need to provide accredited training. This was seen as an important development in helping staff to develop their skills and to embed these new approaches. One manager explained, *‘We should provide accredited training for staff so that they continue to build their knowledge’.* A different approach was suggested by another manager who felt that accredited training should be available for the social pedagogy champions. *I would like the staff to have a qualification in SP. We have got SP champions who have a role in supporting and reporting but if they had a qualification they could have a greater impact.*

Follow up training

Interview participants were asked “What types of follow-up training would help you fully explore the social pedagogic approach?” All staff were enthusiastic about training and many thought follow up training was necessary to embedding the approach in all the homes. Most staff discussed that refresher training would be appropriate every six to nine months. One staff member suggested that with refreshers and exploring practice it can become as embedded the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention⁴ approach. Staff suggested that the social pedagogues could help to lead on these refreshers. The management and staff unanimously advocated for further training that is provided on a regular basis. They expressed that following up training is essential to their skill development and will give them a chance to reflect on their skills they have recently learned, share them with others, put their knowledge to practice, and provide direct feedback to the provider as to what aspects of the training were successful and which parts may need to be revisited. They also expressed that follow-up training is important and at times required to solidify and make permanent any behaviour change in the participants’ approach to their work.

94% of survey respondents agreed they would recommend social pedagogy training to friends and colleagues.

Summary

The training was well received by most staff. Although some admitted to a little pre-programme anxiety this was soon replaced by active engagement and enjoyment as staff began to understand and apply models of social pedagogy. Staff reported a number of specific areas of learning which had resulted from the training. These were

- practical models of social pedagogy,
- shared terminology,
- the history of social pedagogy,
- the need for better planning,
- the importance of evaluation,
- shared and common goal setting,
- self awareness,
- better awareness of the young person,
- reinforcement of current practice,
- team work and relationship building, and
- confidence and risk taking.

A measure of success of the training is the way social pedagogy has now been incorporated into induction for staff and student induction programmes. That said, most research participants felt that there was a need for further training, ongoing continual professional development and accreditation for at least some social pedagogy practitioners.

⁴ Therapeutic Crisis Intervention is an approach used to handle crises and stressful situations. See <http://safeguards-training.net/TCI-SystemOverview.aspx>

5. Impact on practice

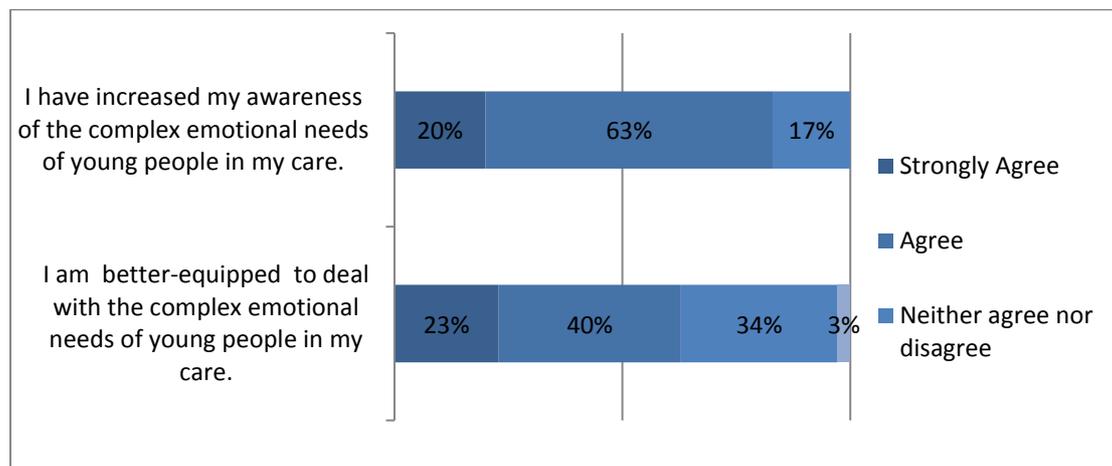
This section deals with the changes in staff practice following the training. It was largely agreed by the home managers and staff that the training had helped them learn new skills and boosted their confidence and improved their approach to their practice. Survey participants were asked questions about whether they experienced changes in attitudes and perceived abilities across a range of potential outcomes as a result of receiving social pedagogy training. These potential outcomes included

- dealing with the complex emotional needs of young people,
- recognising and acting upon the needs of young people in their care,
- advocating and standing up for young people,
- enabling young people to address their own welfare, and
- working collaboratively with young people.

Complex emotional needs

Survey respondents were asked a number of questions regarding working with young people with complex emotional needs (see figure 4). Eighty-three percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their awareness of complex emotional needs increased as a result of the training and 63% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were better equipped to deal with these complex emotional needs

Figure 4: Dealing with complex emotional needs



(n=35)

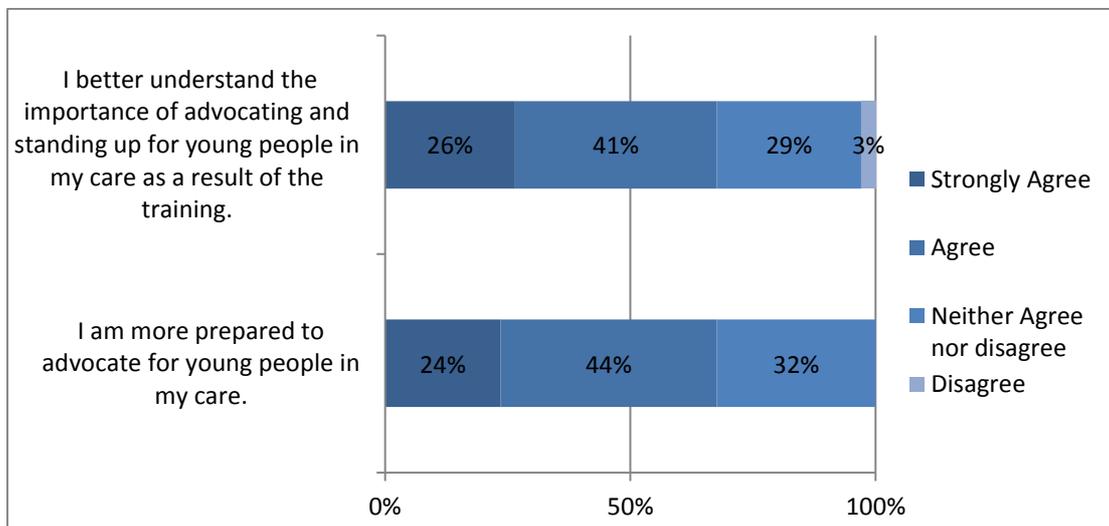
Interview participants largely confirmed these findings. Staff indicated that the training had helped them become more aware of the issues associated with the complex emotional needs of the young people in their care in a way which helped them to structure their practice in a way which helped young people to connect their feelings to behaviours. One member of staff reflected with great enthusiasm that after the training, *“I feel very confident in understanding the complex emotional needs of young people. When I reflect on the activities, I realise what the young people have achieved and what their needs are.”*

Advocacy

The survey asked two questions regarding the importance of being prepared to advocate for the young people in their care (see figure 5). Sixty-seven percent of respondents had a better understanding of the importance of advocating and 'standing up' for young people in their care and 68% were more prepared to advocate for young people in their care after the training.

One interesting outcome of the social pedagogy training has been the way in which practitioners are now engaging with external stakeholders. Some members of other agencies have provided feedback that they have seen a very clear change in the outcomes for young people. One manager explained, *'There has been feedback from other services such as CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), social workers and schools that young people are making positive changes very quickly. We are certainly doing something right!'* Further to this, staff from other agencies and services have begun to ask questions themselves about the availability of social pedagogy training. One manager explained, *'We have found that other professionals are asking about SP and this has empowered the staff because they have got now the theory and knowledge that the others do not have.'* This suggests that there may be an argument for Lincolnshire County Council to improve the range of practitioners who might attend further training in social pedagogy. This could increase the impact of the approach and ensure that is embedded across a far wider range of practitioner groups and services.

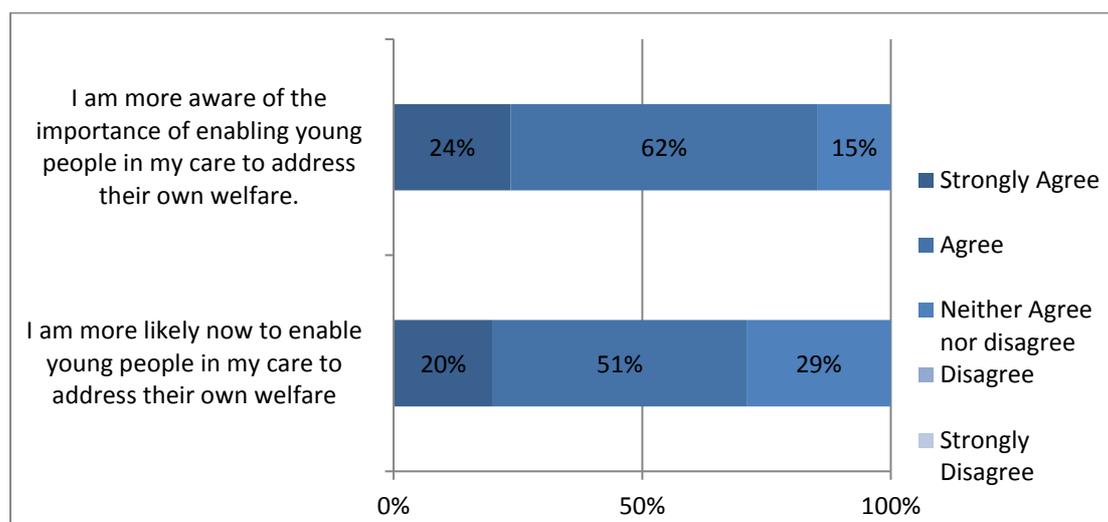
Figure 5: Advocacy



(n=34)

The research explored the extent to which participants were encouraged to take a more child-centred approach which encouraged them to facilitate an environment where the child could address his or her own welfare (see figure 6). Eighty six percent (86%) of respondents suggested they were more aware of the importance of enabling young people in their care to address their own welfare and many (71%) were more likely to enable young people in their care to address their own welfare as a result of the training.

Figure 6: Addressing welfare



(n=34); (n=35)

A coherent approach

One respondent gave an overview of some of the changes to practice seen in her care home, *“we’re all singing from the same song sheet and you kind of know where someone is going with a piece of work and what they are trying to achieve.”* One manager noted how team meetings had changed as result of the training with staff becoming more proactive. *‘Our team meetings are far more interactive now. Prior to the training, it was all about the managers doing the talking. Now, we use the tool to get everybody working together.’*

On a practical level, reporting forms have been updated to include aspects of social pedagogy. This includes more time for reflection when incidents occur at the residential home.

Empowering young people

Staff agreed that their direct work with young people had completely changed as a result of the training. One home manager noted that *“this activity is more holistic and involves and engages young people. It is transparent to everyone and it involves everyone. It is more collective. It is making a significant difference for staff and kids to share their experiences and learn from them”*. This has not been without challenge. Practitioners have been used to being the experts and having control. Social pedagogy requires staff to engage more collaborative approach with young people. One manager noted that *‘The biggest learning has been about engaging the kids – stepping back. As professionals we want to be in control. This encourages us to let our guard down a bit. It is good for relationships. It really inspires you. It makes you want to do more.’*

On a practical level, social pedagogy has resulted in real change for young people. One interview participant stated that as a result of the social pedagogy training she helped a young person to take ownership of their bedroom by allowing him to decorate a wall and to rearrange furniture. As a result of this the room was now tidier.

Managed risk

Staff reported taking more positive and managed risks with young people as a result of the training. One manager noted for example that social pedagogy had provided a new perspective on risk taking. *'It has given staff a language e.g. 'positive risk taking'.* In one example, a young person decided that they wanted to teach a member of staff about rock climbing. This was very challenging to the member of staff as they were afraid of heights. In return the member of staff chose the activity of cave walking for the young person who was afraid of the dark. These exercises worked well particularly with relationship building as they rely on the development of trust between the participants. Staff interview participants related stories of other positive challenges and managed risk. A young person stated that *"I went Skyriding with my carer. She was too afraid to skyride, but I helped her overcome her fear and she enjoyed it."* Both the young people and the members of staff were enthusiastic about how the application of different social pedagogy models has helped them to work together, share experiences and grow in confidence.

Evidencing activities

Several members of staff were proud of their social pedagogy folders which evidenced the work undertaken by both staff and young people with the models learned from the social pedagogy training. Staff described the breakthroughs they had with young people through the use of the social pedagogy models and how having these results inspired them to continue with the approach. In addition one member of staff had revised a reporting form to align with social pedagogy. A home manager reflected that much good practice had existed prior to the training but the use of recording methods had ensured that these were now evidenced.

Our direct work has completely changed; we do far more of the models with the children, our incident form we've completely changed, the reflection is a big part of it as well actually, that was staff and with incidents. We're reflecting more after incidents as a staff team but also with the child we've formed a new template for the child to sit and reflect on incidents afterwards. It's like a story book where they can draw the feelings but they can write it as well and they sit and do that after an incident, not straight after but a couple of days after with another staff member and sit and work through, and that's come from social pedagogy.

Staff interview participant

Evidencing activities with young people has a number of benefits. Not only does a folder of activities provide a focus for reflective practice, but it forms a useful shared resource for the home. A further and unexpected benefit emerged during the research. One manager noted that *'Ofsted inspectors have now been able to collate more evidence. This has become an 'on the shelf' evidence book. This has been part of the contribution to us getting 'outstanding'.*

Professionalising practice

Social pedagogy training has had a number of benefits which have resulted in the way care home staff have begun to work and relate with external stakeholders many of whom have provided positive feedback on the improvement in outcomes for young

people. A number of those interviewed suggested that the growth in confidence experienced by staff as a result of the training goes beyond developing new skills. The training has contributed to developing and defining a new professionalism underpinned by a theoretical and conceptual framework which supports the work that they do. In being able to evidence their impacts using a new vocabulary, staff have experienced respect from external colleagues. One manager noted *'It has given the staff the skills which they can evidence their positive engagement and the way they get outcomes for young people. In the past, residential owners have been seen as babysitters. Now, in meetings with other professionals they can evidence what they are doing. Residential owners are now more respected.'*

Summary

The social pedagogy training has been well received by the staff involved. It is clear to see that even though it is still only a relatively short time since the training has taken place it is being embedded in many of the day to day activities and aspects of practice within the homes. Staff are reporting that it has changed their practice in a number of very distinct ways. These are notably

- a strengthening of the need for an holistic approach,
- a greater motivation towards work,
- greater confidence in understanding and dealing with complex emotional behaviour,
- more reflection on practice,
- engaging and empowering staff,
- engaging and empowering young people,
- recording and evidencing activities and outcomes,
- using managed risk to help support young people to develop self-advocacy and confidence, and
- working more effectively with external partners.

Social pedagogy is seen as a “framework” to support practice development, will improve staff confidence levels and enhance their communication with stakeholders and with other similar bodies.

Staff have also made a number of suggestions for improving and extending the social pedagogy training. These include

- using social pedagogy as part of induction programmes,
- providing regular updates,
- providing accredited training for some individuals, and
- making social pedagogy training available to a wider range of external stakeholders.

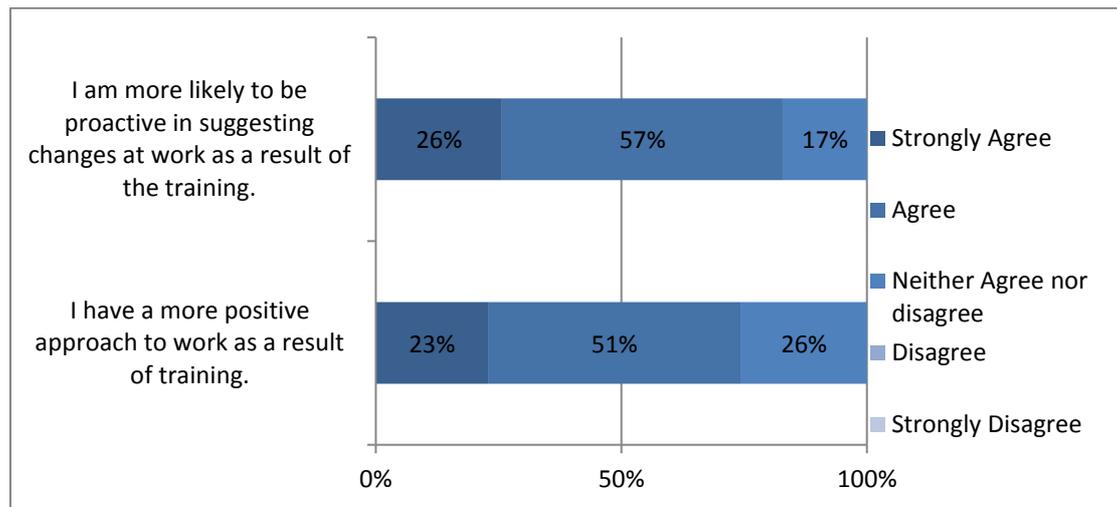
6. Experience of work

This section explores the impact that the social pedagogy training has had on the work environment and practitioners experience of the work place.

Changes in attitudes to work

Survey responses revealed that most respondents (83%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are more likely to be more proactive in suggesting changes at work. Seventy-four percent of staff had a more positive approach to work as a result of the social pedagogy training (See figure 7).

Figure 7: Changes in approach to work



(n=34)

Over half (57%) of respondents agreed that daily life at work had changed for the better as a result of the training and 71% believed that other colleagues shared their positive attitude toward social pedagogy (see figure 8). Interview participants from Northolme were particularly positive about changes in daily life at work as well as colleagues sharing their positive attitude toward social pedagogy. One interview participant explained

I've never seen the staff team more positive, all of the staff team, because we've had some hard times recently, we've had some very challenging children but I've never seen all of the staff team so positive about a new implementation that we're going to do than they have been with this.

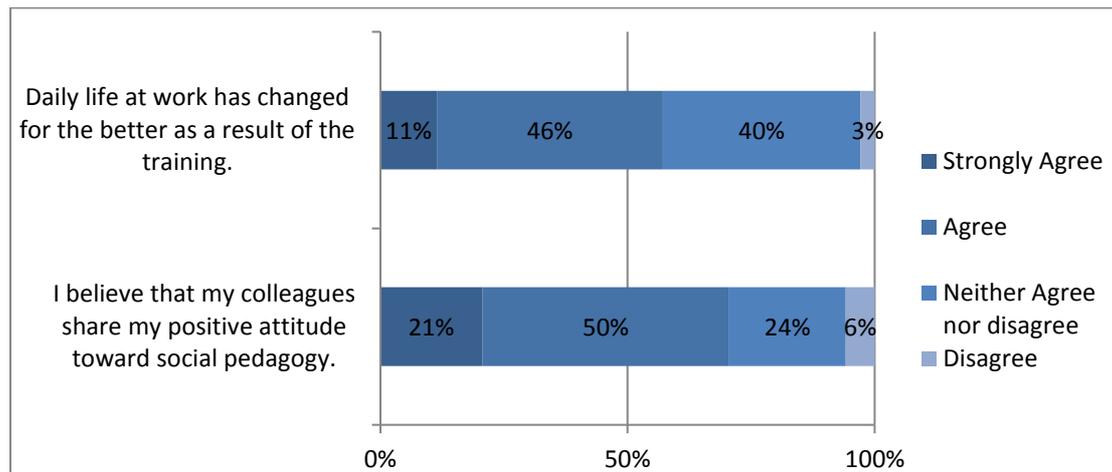
Interview participant

One manager explained how the training had developed more effective team work.

'What is nice is to see the team working more as a team. Everyone is involved in doing social pedagogy with all the children. They do not have to wait until their key workers initiate and manage their activities. The team all encourage each other. Thus, social pedagogy has improved the way the team are working and the team are working now better with all the young people.'

Residential home manager

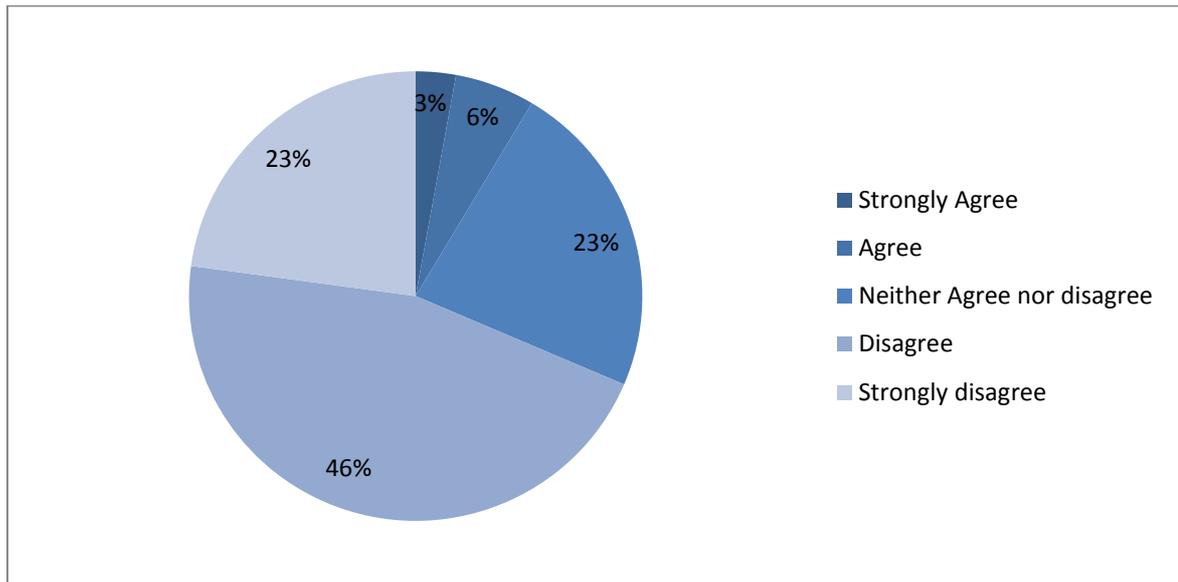
Figure 8: Changes in experience of work



(n=34)

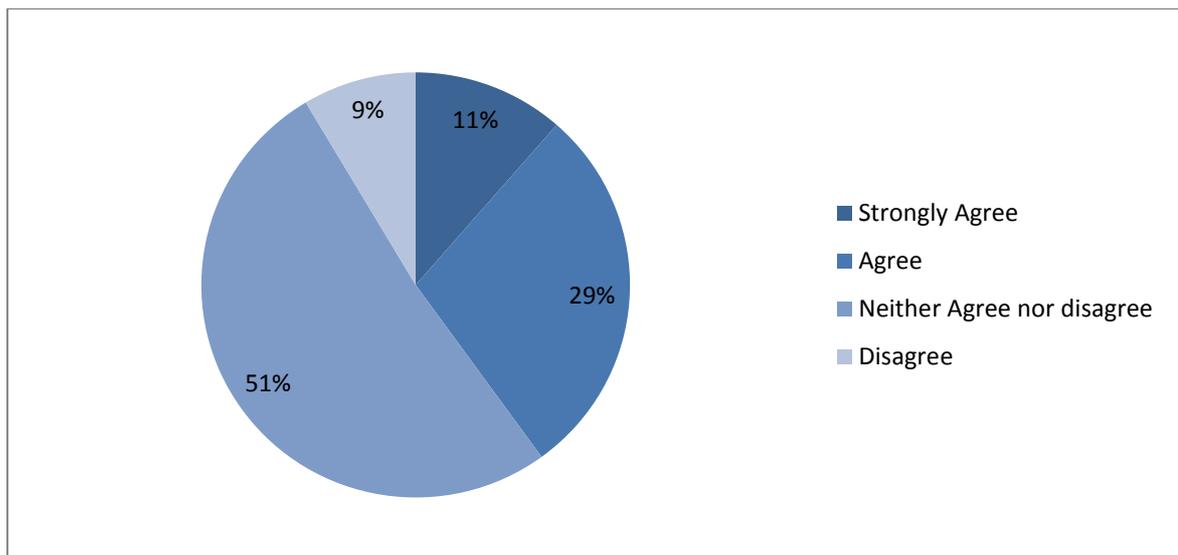
Most respondents (69%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that social pedagogy would lead to problems at work (Figure 9). This is a welcome finding and supports earlier findings that the training has had a positive impact on practice. Interestingly, less than half of respondents (40%) reported that the training has led to a culture change at work (see figure 10). This may seem contradictory however participants who were interviewed during the research tended to focus very much on the positive impact on practice rather than a culture change. Many of those interviewed noted that the training had enhanced reflective practice but they also noted that the main differences had been in evidencing activities. They noted with some pride that they worked with very dedicated teams of practitioners and had always operated within a child-focused and strengths-based culture at the residential care home. In this sense, social pedagogy has been a framework for practice development but has gently enhanced the culture at work rather than leading to major changes in the way teams operate together. The training has given staff more confidence to work more collaboratively and this has developed a shared resource of experience and practice which continues to develop to the benefit of other practitioners and the young people they support. One social pedagogue noted that *'It is about staff and young people's ability and willingness to forge a working relationship that enables them to discuss their works/experiences, collect their joint activities, store them in their memory box and take them with them in future.'*

Figure 9: The social pedagogy approach will lead to problems at work



(n=35)

Figure 10: The training has led to a culture change at work



(n=35)

Challenges with work environment

Survey respondents were asked to discuss any perceived barriers to implementing social pedagogy. Thirty two respondents answered the question, "Please explain any barriers to implementing social pedagogy at work." The most frequently mentioned (11 times) barrier was that staff were not on board or were resistant to change. It is unsurprising that earlier findings suggest that those who have trained in social pedagogy recommend that all staff undertake the training in the future. Other barriers mentioned to implementing social pedagogy are listed below.

- Staff not on board/resistant to change (11 times)

- No barriers (6 times)
- Resource constraints (4 times)
- Time constraints (3 times)
- Paperwork (2 times)
- Young people not engaged (2 times)
- Not spread to enough areas of working practice (2 times)
- Lack of confidence among staff (1 time)
- No mentoring available (1 time)
- Conflict with house policy (1 time)
- Competing demands (1 time)
- Staff missed training (1 time)
- Not enough practical training (1 time)

It should be noted however that during later interviews with staff teams, a very different picture emerged. Overall, staff reported that there had been distinctly positive changes. One member of staff noted that *“Six months ago, it was different. The staff did not feel motivated. Young people also did not feel motivated. Now, you can observe more positive expectations and contribution from both staff and young people.”* This would suggest that even in challenging environments, social pedagogy is a force for positive change.

The research has revealed however that for some, social pedagogy does not have an immediate impact. Although all interview participants stated that the social pedagogy approach has transformed their individual thinking some were aware of resistance among other colleagues. One staff member noted *“I guess some people don’t appreciate it, they have had the training but the penny hasn’t dropped, you know. But generally there is a good vibe.”* This would suggest that some people like to reflect and try out approaches and gradually embed this in practice. One manager explained *‘The exciting thing is that in the first place people thought it was a gimmick but now people recognise there is a need for it. It feels like it is really developing.’*

Of course, new ideas and ways of thinking are not always embraced by everyone and some staff noted that with a concept such as social pedagogy it can take time to embrace and embed new practices. *“The staff team were trying to make social pedagogy something really, really difficult and I still see that a lot with some of the team.”*

Social pedagogues

One way in which Lincolnshire County Council has sought to bridge the gap between the training and practice was the appointment of two social pedagogues to help staff move the approach forward. Many staff commented on how these social pedagogues have integrated into their residential homes and the overriding feeling was that these two individuals provided very necessary and ongoing support and inspiration.

The accessibility of social pedagogues and their availability to engage and observe the staff and young people’s activities was deemed important and necessary for the improvement of social pedagogy practice in all homes. A home manager described how social pedagogues have helped them embed social pedagogy in their homes by

stating “social pedagogues carry out the observations of activities or write them up, but staff can comment on this. It has really helped staff challenge and justify their approaches. I have seen staff really grow.” A member of staff also emphasised the significance of a social pedagogue presence to their practice, and stated that “having a social pedagogue to support us has been very helpful. It has helped us put new ideas into practice.”

Another way in which social pedagogy is being embedded into residential homes is by designating two social pedagogy champions from each residential home. Staff stated that the champions are a part of a steering group of managers and other champions brought together to share ideas and to develop ways that these can be used in a variety of situations within the homes. In addition they share insights into what didn't work well and discuss the reasons why this might be the case. Staff suggested that many individuals had wanted to be appointed as champions and some were disappointed when they were not chosen. This would indicate a high level of commitment to embedding social pedagogy into practice at a local and operational level.

Management support

Staff suggested that proactive and positive management was important in order to effectively embed social pedagogy into the care home. Several staff members felt that they were supported by the management in the home but wanted to see support structures at the strategic level (management outside the home) as well.

“I would like to see the higher managers go on it. Everyone needs a good understanding of social pedagogy and when you are trying to push this forward then they understand what you are saying and doing. That would be nice.”

Residential home staff member

Further investigation of this issue with senior staff indicated that social pedagogy was embedded throughout the strategy for work with young people in the residential care system and beyond. This appears to be more a case of communicating the importance of social pedagogy at all levels rather than developing anew strategy.

Managers also realised the significance of management support, training and the development opportunities available to their staff in improving the quality of care provided and the living conditions for those in their care. One home manager said that sometimes she covered her staff responsibilities during the training so that they could participate in training and group work. She also expressed that she was keen on receiving social pedagogy training that would empower her to make a more significant contribution to her home's practice. She expressed that “I have had the least of training of everyone, but I provided for the staff to attend. So, I have my training with a social pedagogue on an individual basis.”

Summary

The research indicates that the training in social pedagogy has had a positive impact on practitioners' experiences of work with most practitioners agreeing that they had a more positive approach to work which was shared with colleagues. The majority of

survey respondents suggested that the training would not lead to problems at work. Whilst this positive attitude prevails throughout all of the homes, research participants suggested that there were barriers to embedding the approaches and not all of the staff had fully embraced social pedagogy. Conversations with staff revealed that for some staff social pedagogy had been quite a revelation, and had impacted instantly on work whilst others suggested that a 'slow burn' approach was necessary for some staff who wished to try out and reflect over a longer period of time on the new ideas and approaches.

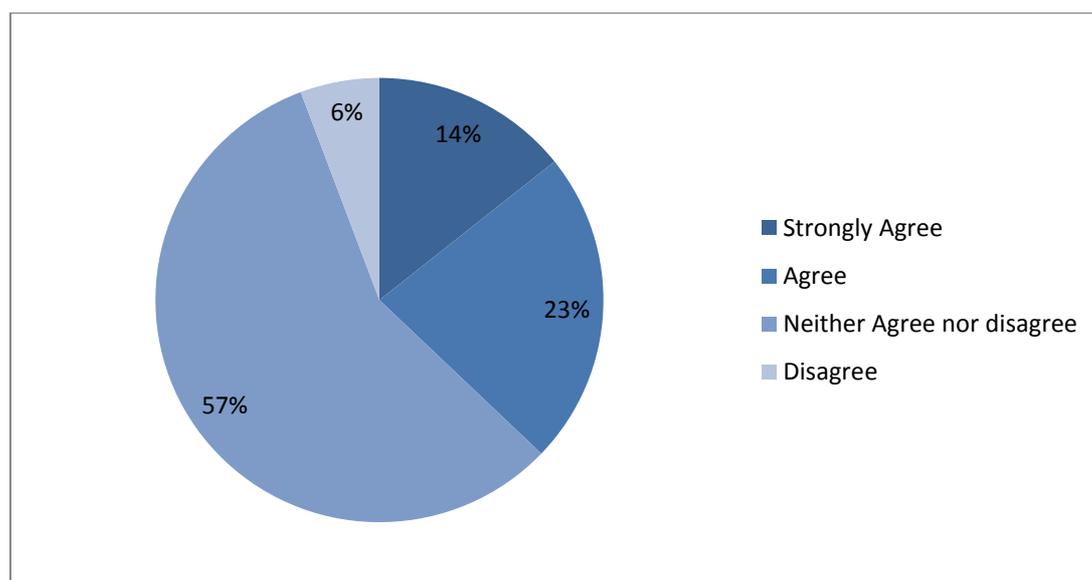
Two significant themes emerged concerning the support required to embed the changes.

- **The provision of trained social pedagogues** and social pedagogy champions in each home were seen as fundamental to success. It should be re-stated that there was considerable competition amongst staff to become social pedagogy champions and not all were successful. Although this was disappointing for some, Lincolnshire County Council managers should take heed of this as it indicates very strong support for social pedagogy in the future and ensures a talent pool for future succession planning.
- **Management support** is also fundamental to the successful implementation of social pedagogy. In all three homes, this was evident and staff spoke very positively about the difference this had made to implementing something new. It is important to recognise that if Lincolnshire County Council wish to embed this approach at all levels strategic leaders and managers need to receive the social pedagogy training. Further to this, support at strategic levels needs to be clearly articulated so that staff can see this as part of an overarching strategy for service delivery.

7. Personal and social development

This section explores how the social pedagogy training has impacted on the personal development of practitioners. More than a third of the survey participants (37%) revealed that the training in social pedagogy has positively changed how they view things in their personal lives. The majority however (57%) reported that the training had had no effect (see figure 11).

Figure 11: The training in social pedagogy has positively changed how I view things in my personal life.



(n=35)

Those that responded that the training positively impacted their personal life were asked to elaborate. Most respondents mentioned that it made them reflect on how they communicate with others (6 times). Some respondents discussed how particular aspects (in particular the learning zone model) of the programme led to the changes in their personal life,

'[The training has] encouraged reflection on my own life history and how this impacts on my professional practice. The learning zone has made me look at how I can challenge myself to move out of my comfort zone.'

Survey respondent

'I again now try and use a more holistic approach within my personal life. I have tried to use some of the models for example, the learning zone model. I feel this was a good way at looking at myself so that I can try to overcome some issues I have within the panic zone. Also to try and build upon myself by bringing myself out of the comforts zone more.'

Survey respondent

Summary

Some staff reported that the social pedagogy training had a wider impact on their personal and social development and that this was felt outside their place of work.

For the small number that did report an impact this was largely noted in the way people reflected upon their communication and interpersonal skills. Some staff reported using social pedagogy models particularly the learning zone.

8. Impact on young people

Experience of social pedagogy

Care home residents were aware of the concept of social pedagogy and its application and practice by staff. In particular, one older resident (15 years) spoke very eloquently about social pedagogy and its impact

“The staff get the chance to write down their activities and engage the kids in a way that you do not realise, which is social pedagogy. Kids also get the chance and time to document their daily activities. Recording these activities are not just to produce reports and make large files, but to help staff improve their practice.”

Resident

Nine of the young people from the three homes who participated in the focus group were very aware that staff had engaged with them in a new way and some used the term social pedagogy to describe the changes. Some young people were able to name some of the models which staff were using for example some referred to the fact that they had worked with Johari’s window and with ‘the diamond’. The young people believed that these approaches challenged them in positive ways. They also noticed that participating in joint activities and engaging with staff provided them with an opportunity to learn multiple skills like communication, socialisation and learning skills. A young person stated *“when we work with staff, we get the opportunity to learn new skills and expertise. These social activities are social pedagogy.”* Another young person noted that *“it is good to go and work with different members of staff, as they give you the opportunity to do and engage in different activities. It feels better like this.”*

From the interviews and group discussions it was clearly evident that social pedagogy had resulted in the development of stronger relationships involving trust and confidence and led to both staff and young people trying new activities. A home manager recalled her encounter with young people in an outdoor activity that was intended to *‘take the staff out of their comfort zones.’* She summarised her experience and the change she observed in the way the young people engaged.

“I do not think if I would be involved, but the young people insisted. It was very interesting... one resident forced me up a climbing wall and I was terrified. It helped me understand what they [young people] were facing. It really helps the relationships develop.”

Residential care home staff member

Experience of the residential care home

Many of the young people who participated in the research were resigned to their accommodation arrangements but many spoke about their desire to live in their own homes. A number of young people explained that although they have got their own rooms, furniture, TVs, sinks, wardrobes, chargers and games living in the care homes sometimes made them frustrated and anxious about the relationships they had with their real families. A 15-years old expressed her experience as

“being here does not just feel like home. I have got a home with my dad elsewhere. The people here – I mean all kids – get along with each other with peace and respect. We are a mismatched family. The relationships are very friendly, though. Some of us live like sisters and brothers, but in long-term we understand that we are not family and will never be a family. We have got our own families.”

Resident

The young people’s relationships with staff were described in largely positive terms. The young people reflected on their relationships and described relationships with staff as supportive and ‘amusing’. Staff were described as playing and talking with the residents in a friendly way. A young person stated that *“staff are very friendly here and easily talk to kids.”* Another young person also stated *“the way we work together, share our experiences together and learn together, makes us feel homely”*.

Young people reported that they felt empowered to raise issues and concerns through regular residents meetings. Opinions and suggestions which are raised during the residents meetings, get discussed in the staff meetings and the majority of their concerns are addressed and resolved. Further to residents meetings, homes operate a system of complaints forms which are completed by young people should a need arise. Complaints are addressed by staff and management and the residents are informed of the outcome and results of the decisions.

One interesting finding from the research was that young people have a very strong view about how staff should be dressed for work. The young people preferred informal dress by staff as this made home feel more homely. One even commented that slippers were the best form of footwear by staff as this made everything feel relaxed and comfortable. Another said that *“we like their costume. Informal clothing and appearance make them look more like parents and not strict teachers in much more regimented settings. Their dressing culture makes us feel more ‘homely’.”*

The young people recognised that staff have a life outside of the home which does not involve them and that staff themselves have to juggle their own complex domestic arrangements and problems. The young people were very clear that these problems should stay at home and not be brought to work and recognised in a very positive way that staff were very professional in this regard. As one young person said *“they leave them out as soon as they enter the house. The staff are very professional and do not raise their challenges and difficulties with kids.”*

A very important feature which forms the basis for strong relationships with staff is their accessibility and supportive approach. Young people explained that this inspires them to work harder and learn more. These features of their relationships with staff leads them to enjoy working and engaging with them both individually and also in groups. A young person reflected on her experience as *“when we work with staff, we get the opportunity to learn new skills and expertise. These social activities are social pedagogy.”*

Personal, educational and social development

Research indicates that where staff in care homes are well trained and have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to engage effectively and empower young people to take control of their lives, the outcomes for young people in terms of their personal development and educational progression are positive. The managers, staff and the young people who participated in the research all viewed social pedagogy as both beneficial and instrumental in delivering care and improving the skills of young people. Both agreed that social pedagogy offers new perspectives and fresh techniques for their daily interactions between managers, staff members and young people.

Young people in the care homes were able to articulate their views about the impact of social pedagogy on their development, often referring to social pedagogy by name and the models which they were using with their care home staff. Their conversations offered evidence that the use of these new models had resulted in significant improvements both in the environment in their homes and also on their skill development. A young person explained that *“the way the home works, is really good. Everyone’s needs and demands are valued and listened to, which is very good.”*

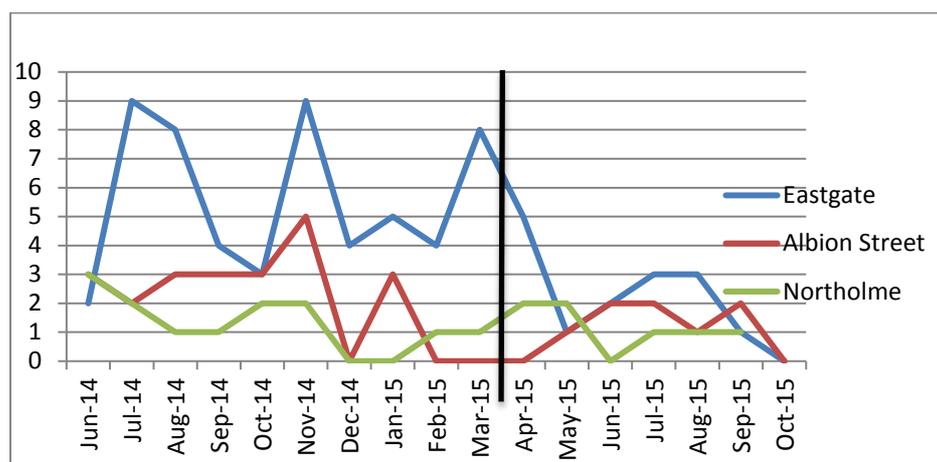
The evidence suggests that the young people are more inspired to participate in group activities, record their work and share their experiences with staff and other residents. Young people reported that they had grown in confidence and were more able to articulate their needs and concerns.

Impact on behavior

During the course of the research management information data was collected from each care home in order to determine any changes in young people’s behaviour which might be related to a change in the models of social pedagogy developed through the training. The use of such data has limited impact on our understanding of the training due to small numbers of young people involved (19 in total) and the transient nature of the populations of the homes. There does appear to be a positive trend which is worthy of note in terms of the number of restraints.

Since the training in social pedagogy in April 2015 the number of incidents of physical restraint in all of the homes has fallen. Figure 12 shows that in Eastgate for example incidents were regularly in the order of 8 or 9 per month before the training and this has reduced to only one in September 2016. The overall trends in the other homes can also be seen to fall although not to the same extent with Northolme and Albion Street seeing reductions. The extent to which this trend can be attributed to social pedagogy is not clear.

Figure 12: Incidents of physical restraint



Impact on other data collected from homes is less conclusive. Incidents in the following areas all fluctuated with no apparent trends: number of children at risk of child sexual exploitation, numbers of incidents of children going missing, number of children away from placement without authorization, number of sanctions given, Instances of substance abuse, illness and incidents of bullying

Summary

Young people's experiences of social pedagogy have been very positive. In many instances, young people used the language of social pedagogy to describe a range of benefits including

- better relationships with staff,
- improved confidence,
- more engagement in their surroundings,
- more engagement in activities, and
- improved relationships with each other.

Young people also seemed to show a genuine understanding of staffs own personal needs and respected their ability to leave their own problems at home and to concentrate their attention of the needs of the residents. Young people spoke at length about their experiences of the care system and made many references to the types of behaviour by staff which made their residence feel like home. These included

- friendly, supportive and accessible staff,
- staff who were fun,
- staff wearing casual, relaxed clothing,
- being able to challenge staff to do new things themselves,
- having some influence on their environment such as decorating their own, rooms or choosing bedlinen and soft furnishings, and
- having the chance to 'have their say' about issues which affect them.

Although the management information was largely inconclusive concerning the real impact on young people's behaviour there did appear to be a marked reduction in restraints since the training. Lincolnshire County Council may wish to consider how

they monitor the changes in different indicators of behaviour over a longer period of time to establish patterns and trends.

9. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

Young people within the residential care system are a particularly vulnerable population. Social pedagogy is one approach which has become increasingly popular as a way to engage looked-after children in the United Kingdom. Social pedagogy seeks to empower adults to promote the personal development and well-being of the young people (Kyriacou, *et al.*, 2009). Lincolnshire County Council has invested in social pedagogy training in order to improve the outcomes for this group of young people.

Experience of the training

The training was well received by most staff. Three main learning outcomes emerged as a result of the training. These were

- record keeping and holistic learning approach,
- confidence and risk taking, and
- team work and relationship building.

It is clear from the research that social pedagogy practices are being embedded in a range of activities and functions in all three of the residential homes in the study. Staff report that it has changed their practice in a number of very distinct ways. These are notably

- a strengthening of the need for an holistic approach,
- a greater motivation towards work,
- greater confidence in understanding and dealing with complex emotional behaviour,
- more reflection on practice,
- engaging and empowering staff,
- engaging and empowering young people,
- recording and evidencing activities and outcomes,
- using managed risk to help support young people to develop self-advocacy and confidence, and
- working more effectively with external partners.

A measure of success of the training is the way social pedagogy has now been incorporated into induction for staff and student induction programmes in some homes. That said, most research participants felt that there was a need for further training, ongoing continual professional development and accreditation for at least some social pedagogy practitioners.

Staff have also made a number of suggestions for improving and extending the social pedagogy training. These include

- using social pedagogy as part of induction programmes in all residential homes,
- providing regular updates,
- providing accredited training for some individuals, and

- making social pedagogy training available to a wider range of external stakeholders.

Impact on practice

The research indicates that the training in social pedagogy has had a positive impact on practitioner's experiences of work. Conversations with staff revealed that for some staff social pedagogy had been quite a revelation, and had impacted instantly on work whilst others suggested that a 'slow burn' approach was necessary for some staff who wished to try out and reflect over a longer period of time on the new ideas and approaches.

The findings from the evaluation suggest that staff found the training valuable and evidenced using the models from the training to empower and reflect with young people on their development. As a result of the training they reported being more aware of young people's needs particularly in terms of advocating for their care and enabling them to address their own welfare.

The research suggests that two specific measures help to embed social pedagogy in practice more effectively. These are

- the provision of specialist social pedagogues who can support staff to develop and embed social pedagogy practice, and
- management support for new ways of working.

The implications for Lincolnshire County Council are positive. Firstly, there is an appetite and commitment for social pedagogy amongst the workforce and training should be made available for staff and managers in order that new approaches are supported and embedded in practice. Secondly, the employment of social pedagogues will help to further embed social pedagogy into everyday practice.

Impact on staff personal and social development

A small number of staff reported that the social pedagogy training had a wider impact on their personal and social development and that this was felt outside their place of work. This was largely noted in the way people reflected upon their communication and interpersonal skills. Some staff reported using social pedagogy models particularly the learning zone in their personal lives.

Young people's experiences of social pedagogy

Young people's experiences of social pedagogy have been very positive. In many instances, young people used the language of social pedagogy to describe a range of benefits including

- better relationships with staff,
- improved confidence,
- more engagement in their surroundings,
- more engagement in activities, and
- improved relationships with each other.

Young people also recognized that the social pedagogy training had had an impact on the way staff worked with them. In particular, some young people spoke of the types of behavior exhibited by staff which made the residential setting feel more like

home. A number of the observations made by young people can be seen to have their roots in social pedagogy.

Young people also seemed to show a genuine understanding of staffs own personal needs and respected their ability to leave their own problems at home and to concentrate their attention of the needs of the residents. Young people spoke at length about their experiences of the care system and made many references to the types of behaviour by staff which made their residence feel like home. These included such things as being able to challenge staff to do new things themselves, having some influence on their environment such as decorating their own rooms or choosing bedlinen and soft furnishings and. having the chance to 'have their say' about issues which affect them

Although the management information was largely inconclusive concerning the real impact on young people's behaviour there did appear to be a marked reduction in physical restraints since the training. Lincolnshire County Council may wish to consider how they monitor the changes in different indicators of behaviour over a longer period of time to establish patterns and trends.

Recommendations

The following six recommendations emerged as a result of the evaluation research.

Recommendation 1: Review and develop the training in social pedagogy

Research participants made a number of suggestions for developing the training in social pedagogy. These suggestions are all aimed at developing the staff confidence and expertise for all individuals working in children's services so that a more coherent and consistent approach is taken by all those working with young people in residential care. These include

- using social pedagogy as part of induction programmes,
- provide regular updates on social pedagogy activities,
- provide accredited training for some individuals, and
- Making social pedagogy training available to a wider range of external stakeholders.

Recommendation 2: Review the succession planning for social pedagogy champions and specialists

The staff involved in the research demonstrated a genuine interest and commitment to using social pedagogy in their practice. This was observed through the number of staff who had expressed an interest in becoming a social pedagogy champion. Although some staff were disappointed at not being chosen this does demonstrate the appetite for social pedagogy and Lincolnshire County Council managers should take heed of this and review their succession planning to ensure that the motivation of the talent pool is maintained and used to implement this approach across the county in other ways.

Recommendation 3: Articulate the levels commitment to social pedagogy at management level.

In order for the social pedagogy approach to truly become embedded in each residential home it must be seen to be embraced and enforced at both senior

management and house management level. This will provide the support to the social pedagogues and to those members of staff that are enthusiastically using the approach with young people. Some ways in which this could be done could be by ensuring that all managers and strategic leaders undertake the training.

Recommendation 4: Continue to employ and empower social pedagogues.

Evidence from the literature suggests that the skill and confidence of social pedagogues in the residential home is important. Feedback from staff at the interviews suggested that the social pedagogues are important to ensure the sustainability of social pedagogy in residential homes.

Recommendation 5: Continue to train new staff in social pedagogy. All new staff should be trained in the social pedagogy approach in order to ensure its sustainability.

Recommendation 6: Encourage champions to empower and mentor other staff.

It was clear from the stakeholder interviews that several members of staff were enthusiastic about the social pedagogy approach. They can be encouraged further by identifying social pedagogy champions to work alongside social pedagogues to mentor other staff to embed social pedagogy in their practice.

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11. Appendix one: Staff interview schedule

Evaluating the Social Pedagogy training and developments in Lincolnshire: Staff and stakeholders

The International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS) is conducting an evaluation of the impact of the recent training in social pedagogy within children's services in Lincolnshire County Council. The training is due to take place between February and May 2015. Forty five staff in three care homes (Albion Street, Eastgate and Northolme) plus others will receive the training. LCC want to understand the impact of this training and development work on the experiences of young people, staff and organisations. In particular they want to understand how social pedagogy practices affect the outcomes for young people. In addition they are interested in learning about how the training and support which staff receive impact on their confidence and competence.

The research will involve a number of phases including an online survey to all staff participants and focus groups with staff and residents. The results of the research will be analysed and presented in a report which will be used to help inform decisions about training in this area in the future. LCC wish to receive a full evaluation report by the end of November 2015

We are interested in your thoughts about the training you received, its implementation and any impacts it may have had on your professional and personal development. This research will be published as an evaluation report in order to inform future developments in training.

Your answers will be kept anonymous and any information provided will not be attributed to a specific individual. It might be possible to identify you from the answers given due to the small numbers participating in the research. The researchers will take measures when presenting the data to maintain your anonymity. You may leave the focus group at any time and can withdraw your responses up to a week after the focus group has finished.

If you have any questions about this research, please contact Vanessa Dodd who works at the University of Derby at v.dodd@derby.ac.uk

You will need to sign the informed consent letter to participate in this research.

1. How would you define successful training?
2. What did you think of social pedagogy prior to receiving training?
3. Before undertaking the training in social pedagogy (SP) how confident were you in your understanding of the complex emotional needs of young people in your care?
 - Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all confident and 5 is very confident.
4. Tell us about the training

- What was your experience?
 - Did it meet your expectations?
 - Did you enjoy it? Why?
 - What would you change? Why?
5. What do you know now about practice that you didn't know before the training?
- What were the three most important messages?
 - What were the three most important skills?
 - What were the three most important behaviours?
 - What were the three most important attitudes?
6. How has the training in SP affected your professional practice
- In the way you relate to the young people in your care? Any examples?
 - In the way you relate to professional colleagues? Any examples
 - In the way you relate to others at work? Any examples?
7. How has the training affected your work environment?
- What has been the reaction from other colleagues?
 - Are you supported in the approach at work?
8. How has the training affected your attitude to work?
9. What changes need to be made to fully embed the social pedagogical approach in your work environment?
10. As a result of the training 'working collaboratively' with young people means.....
11. After undertaking the training in social pedagogy how confident are you in your understanding of the complex emotional needs of young people in your care?
- Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all confident and 5 is very confident.
12. Would you recommend the SP training to your colleagues?
- Why?
 - Why not?
13. What types of follow up training would help you fully explore the social pedagogic approach?

14. What types of training do you believe would be most effective to help you provide support to young people?

12. Appendix two: Young people's focus group schedule

Evaluating the Social Pedagogy training and developments in Lincolnshire: Young people's discussion guide

The International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS) is conducting research into recent training which some staff have received. The training took place between February and May 2015. Forty five staff in three residential homes (Albion Street, Eastgate and Northolme) plus others received the training. LCC want to understand the impact of this training and development work on the experiences of young people, staff and organisations. In particular they want to understand how the training has improved things for young people. In addition they are interested in learning about how the training and support which staff received impact on their confidence to do their jobs.

The research will involve a number of activities including an online survey to all staff and focus groups like this one with staff and residents. The results of the research will be analysed and presented in a report which will be used to help make decisions about training in this area in the future.

We are interested in your thoughts about how things such as the service you receive and the place that you live have changed recently.

Your answers will be kept anonymous and any information provided will not be attributed to a specific individual. It might be possible to identify you from the answers given due to the small numbers participating in the research. The researchers will take measures when presenting the data to maintain your anonymity. You may finish with the research at any time and you can withdraw your responses up to a week after the group has finished.

If you have any questions about this research, please contact Vanessa Dodd who works at the University of Derby at v.dodd@derby.ac.uk

Getting Started

- Introductions
- Names and ages
- Informed consent process

Research questions

1. Please describe the place that you live.
2. What is good about it?
3. What is not so good?
4. What would you change?
5. Do you get a chance to suggest changes? Is something done about this when you do?
6. Generally speaking which picture reflects the type of people who work in your home?
7. How do you get on with the staff at your home? Why is this?
8. Is there anything else you want to add about the place that you live?

13. Appendix three: Staff survey

Introduction

The International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS) is conducting an evaluation of the impact of the recent training in social pedagogy within children's services in Lincolnshire County Council. We are interested in your thoughts about the training you received, its implementation and any impacts it may have had on your professional and personal development. This research will be published as an evaluation report in order to inform future developments in training.

The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Your answers will be kept anonymous and any information provided will not be attributed to a specific individual. It might be possible to identify you from the answers given due to the small numbers participating in the research. The researchers will take measures when presenting the data to maintain your anonymity. You may end the survey at any time however after the survey has been submitted there will not be a chance to withdraw your responses.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Nicki Moore at n.moore@derby.ac.uk

By clicking 'next' this means you are happy to continue with the survey.

Approach to practice

1. Before undertaking the training in social pedagogy how confident were you in your understanding of the complex emotional needs of young people in your care?

Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all confident and 5 is very confident.

1 - Not at all confident 2 3 4 5 - Very confident

Approach to practice - your view of the social pedagogy training

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements in relation to your training in social pedagogy.

2. The training in social pedagogy met my expectations.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. I enjoyed the training sessions in social pedagogy.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Approach to practice - outcomes of the training

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements in relation to your training in social pedagogy.

4. I have increased my awareness of the complex emotional needs of young people in my care.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

5. My ability to recognise the needs of young people in my care has increased.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

6. I am better-equipped to deal with the complex emotional needs of young people in my care.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Approach to practice - outcomes of the training

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements in relation to your training in social pedagogy.

7. I better understand the importance of advocating and standing up for young people in my care as a result of the training.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

8. I am more prepared to advocate for young people in my care.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

9. I am more aware of the importance of enabling young people in my care to address their own welfare.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Approach to practice - outcomes of the training

10. I am more likely now to enable young people in my care to address their own welfare.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

11. As a result of the training 'working collaboratively' with young people means.....

12. My skills in working collaboratively with young people in my care have increased as a result of the training.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

13. The training has enhanced my professional practice.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Approach to practice - outcomes of the training

14. What are the top three most important things you learned during your training?

15. What three areas of training could be improved?

16. After undertaking the training in social pedagogy how confident are you in your understanding of the complex emotional needs of young people in your care?

Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all confident and 5 is very confident.

1 - Not at all confident 2 3 4 5 - Very confident

Approach to practice - embedding social pedagogy in work

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements in relation to your training in social pedagogy.

17. Before undertaking the training in social pedagogy how confident were you about your work and working environment?

Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all confident and 5 is very confident.

1 - Not at all confident 2 3 4 5 - Very confident

18. I have a more positive approach to work as a result of the training.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

19. I am more likely to be proactive in suggesting changes at work as a result of the training.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Approach to practice - embedding social pedagogy in work

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements in relation to your training in social pedagogy.

20. I believe that my colleagues share my positive attitude toward social pedagogy.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

21. All staff should be trained in social pedagogy.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

22. Daily life at work has changed for the better as a result of the training.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Approach to practice - embedding social pedagogy in work

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements in relation to your training in social pedagogy.

23. The social pedagogy approach will lead to problems at work.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

24. The training has led to a culture change at work.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Approach to practice - embedding social pedagogy in work

25. Please explain the ways in which the training has changed your approach to work.

26. Please explain any barriers to implementing social pedagogy at work.

27. After undertaking the training in social pedagogy how positive do you feel about your work and working environment?

Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is 'not at all confident' and 5 is 'very confident'.

1 - Not at all confident 2 3 4 5 - Very confident

Personal and social development as a result of social pedagogy training

Please read following statements and tick your level of agreement with each of the statements in relation to the training you received in social pedagogy.

28. The training in social pedagogy has positively changed how I view things in my personal life.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

29. Please explain the ways in which the training has impacted upon your personal life.

30. Would you recommend social pedagogy training to friends or colleagues?

- Yes
- No

Why or why not?

About you

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

31. I am

- male
 female

32. What is your age?

- Under 19
 20-29
 30-39
 40-49
 50-59
 Over 60

33. In which children's care homes do you work? (tick all that apply)

- Albion Street
 Eastgate
 Northolme

34. What is your highest qualification? (Please specify qualification and subject)

35. What relevant professional qualifications do you hold? (Please specify qualification and subject)

Thank you for completing this survey. If you have any questions or comments about the survey, please contact Nicki Moore at n.moore@derby.ac.uk or 01332 591578