

PROGRAMME PROVIDER REFLECTION ON “FOUNDATIONS FOR LIFE: WHAT WORKS TO SUPPORT PARENT CHILD INTERACTION IN THE EARLY YEARS” REPORT BY THE EARLY INTERVENTION FOUNDATION

The Evidence Journey: Case Study & Testimonial

Provider: EPEC

Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities is an innovative, low cost method of working together with socially disadvantaged communities to ensure that they get effective, evidence based, early parenting intervention.

The programme aims to improve parent-child relationships, reduce child behaviour problems and improve parenting and parents' confidence. It is also designed to build community capacity and social capital by building genuine partnerships between services and communities

Science and evidence have been central to EPEC's development and success. Over a decade, we have carefully used evidence-based parenting methods and approaches to create effective programme content. We have used robust community based methods to develop a peer-led approach.

As we developed EPEC, we collected outcome data and conducted a pilot uncontrolled trial to initially test whether we were able to achieve the outcomes and effects we hoped for. Positive early results, coupled with successful delivery and parent feedback, meant that we were able to expand our service offer and conduct a randomised controlled trial. The trial results boosted our confidence and provided evidence of effectiveness.

We have conducted additional research to better understand the work of our parent facilitators and the programme's impact on parents' social capital.

Submitting EPEC for evaluation using evidence standards is a challenging process. It involves scrutiny from external experts who have held up a mirror to EPEC, a programme that we believe in and are committed to. We are pleased that the strengths of the programme have been recognized and valued by our peers. It has also helped us to think about how we strengthen our evidence-base and continue to explore the performance of our programme in routine service delivery. We have developed further versions of EPEC for parents of teenagers, aged 12-16yrs, and parents of babies under 1yr. We also have adapted the programme for parents living in homeless accommodation. Our outcome evaluation and research continues. We are currently comparing routine programme outcomes with those achieved in research studies as well as examining how outcomes differ between parents attending EPEC.

