

The logo for the United Youth Alliance (UYA) features the lowercase letters 'uya' in white, set against a dark purple speech bubble shape. Below the bubble, the text 'united youth alliance' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

**uya**

united youth alliance



**Blackpool**  
Better Start

# **Blackpool Betterstart & United Youth Alliance Engaging Dads Evaluation**

## Overview and Process

This evaluation has been developed in conjunction with the Dads group that were involved in the co-design, co-delivery and active process of co-production activities and storytelling sessions leading to the training for practitioners and leaders across Blackpool and the Fylde Coast. The value of the co-delivery is a clear determinate and the value from the Dads that participated and in particular Tony Hanlon and Peter Holt cannot be underestimated in this year's iteration of the Engaging Dads training.

The following areas will lead to how the process and outcomes of the project led to intrinsic and extrinsic successes for both the Dads involved and practitioner participants on the training events. The brief overview will indicate the number of participants with analysis of value in approaches. This is followed by a review undertaken with Dads regarding their perception of the process and delivery of the training events offering qualitative narratives as responses to gain and learn from.

## Training Dates and Attendees (face to face and online delivery)

54 delegates attended one of the 8 2 hours training events delivered. The attendees averaged an equal split between face to face sessions and online sessions. Dads indicated that the face to face sessions were more beneficial whilst colleagues in attendance shared that the online sessions created accessibility. There is a differential of being 'in the room' with Dads as the activities encourage enhanced depth of relationship. It is clear however that the messaging lands in both formats, the added value of the face to face is a further relational aspects between practitioner and Dads.

## Process & Participation

### 1. How well did we work together as a group?

After a period of adjustment to roles and familiarity with materials and process of the training plan, we worked well together. We worked out who was better at each part and took these on as the sessions ran.

Each session improved as we gained confidence in the steps in each session. Consistency helped.

Relationships developed between us over time making it very easy to work together.

The overall process from initial meet to delivery assisted in the important development of relationships between group members inclusive of facilitator. In co-production working, the importance of discussing and considering power in relationships needs to be addressed regularly and power shared between lead facilitator as participant and participants as lead facilitators. This balance was achieved progressively through a planned consistency in approach, investment in the experiences of Dads and through staged development in responsibility over the training

sessions. This was agreed post session in relation to activities and input that was mutually agreed.

## 2. Did you feel included and valued in discussions?

Always.

Time was not a problem, anytime there was a conversation needed, we met and talked it through.

There were some conversations that were not directly relevant to the training and this was afforded time as well; day to day stuff that happens in the lives of either of us. This was important.

I heard my story and experience in the training and had ownership over my own story.

## 3. What worked well in our collaboration?

We talked about power a lot from the beginning and it changed and was shared making it better, there was less direction over time and this meant collaboration happened.

## 4. What challenges did we face, and how did we overcome them?

There were not challenges, everything was set up and we shared out the activities and things to do.

There was the odd challenge in the room from people attending, we returned to the plan to keep focus. The ability to return challenge based on experiences changed over time and made it easier to work with people in the room.

## 5. Did we have the right balance of professional and lived experience voices?

Some groups wanted more professional voice (Steve's input) and some wanted lived experience voice from me and Peter, but it needs both to make it work.

Defo, we switched between both when needed and learnt how and when to interrupt each other.

## **Impact & Outcomes**

## 6. How effectively did we achieve our goals?

It went really well, each session had someone that left where we had made a difference.

Hearing the realities with the Dad in the room changed the way professionals responded.

Every time, people were coming over and thanking us for being part of it and telling them about our experiences.

#### 7. What tangible outcomes or changes have resulted from our work?

The groups start sharing ideas about their work and how to do things better, the activities make people consider how they do their job.

Loads, just the way people talked about how they want to work with Dads more and want to make

#### 8. Have you gained any new skills or confidence?

My public speaking has got better, my confidence has increased.

I got less nervous about talking about being in prison, but it is part of my story and my confidence in doing it changed each time.

Actual participants took away that Dads do want to engage but can resist forced change, I talked about this and they were listening and taking it on board, it just makes you feel good that the groups were listening.

Remembering that people's homes are a safe place and mine is too.

### **Support & Resources**

#### 9. Did we have the right support and resources to succeed?

Yes

Yes, bit in at the deep end at the beginning, but you were always ready to step in.

#### 10. Were there any barriers that affected participation?

Dates and times were planned with us

When the group is bigger or smaller it is different.

### **Sustainability & Next Steps**

#### 11. What should we do differently next time?

Make the sessions longer so that there is a chance to have a longer break with a brew to meet people of a brew.

### 12. Are there opportunities for ongoing collaboration?

The family hub want Dads to create drop in sessions for Dads; another organisation is developing further spaces to work in activity groups for Dads

### 13. What advice would we give to other co-production groups?

Time to learn about everyone and work hard on establishing the power sharing. You talked about that all the time and at first we were following what you said and because you kept returning to it and then we started taking responsibility.

When we had got past the bit where we did not rely on roles, the sessions were better as there were three trainers in the room and not one, but that is about us and other groups should think about that part.

### 14. Would you do it again?

I would jump at the chance to do it again and would do more next time around. I wonder what it would be like if me and Tony did the opening bit, you suggested it but that did not feel safe. Now that we have finished, I would defo have a go at running the whole thing – you can be there but only as a support. You could train us up more and we could take it to more places.

This training made people listen and I would do it again so that it does not go quiet now that people have gone back to their normal work.

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