

Every conversation starts with the child”

Look, Say, Sing, Play York



This week's blog has been written for us by Helen Westerman, head of local campaigns, NSPCC and Rob Newton, project manager, City of York Council. Helen and Rob have been working on the look, say, sing play campaign, developed by the NSPCC which is now being rolled out to families in York through a fantastic partnership with City of York Council and a range of other health, social care and voluntary sector partners.

I am sure that you will find something interesting in the information Rob and Helen have provided and can find some time to check out the information which is on the website [Look, Say, Sing, Play - Brain-building tips | NSPCC](#) which is great for sharing with families. I have also included some up to date information from the team at 'The Island' at the end of the blog.

Rob, Helen....

In a nutshell, it (look, say, sing, play) aims to give parents the tools and confidence to strengthen their bond with their baby or toddler and build their baby's brain – all backed by the latest science relating to child development.

As social workers and other professionals working with children and families, you will know how important the parent child relationship is for children to thrive and succeed in life. A strong parent-child bond also reduces the risk of abuse and neglect.

Look Say Sing Play aims to improve the interactions between parents and their babies by encouraging them to be more sensitive to their baby's cues and therefore more able to identify and respond to their baby's needs.

Last year, we piloted the campaign in other sites across the UK and feedback from practitioners in health and social care who have used the materials with families has been really encouraging.

Rosie, a social worker from Sheffield, reported that she's been supporting parents she's in contact with to sign up to receive the weekly Look Say Sing Play email which includes a brain building tip that parents can try with baby at home. Rosie said that these have been particularly important during the pandemic when a lot of babies aren't going to playgroups or Children's Centres.

Rosie particularly likes the series of 'calm and connect' tips which parents get from the emails which has helped some of the parents she works with to manage their emotions during these difficult times, and said the fun activities being promoted by LSSP can be used with all parents as they don't require special toys or equipment. She's also shown some of the LSSP clips on YouTube to parents who are struggling to know how to interact with their baby.



We've also heard from Pat, a nurse practitioner, who included LSSP in her verbal report at a CIN meeting. She was referring to a young mum who now sings and talks

to her unborn baby after initially feeling awkward, but is now really enjoying it when baby responds by kicking when she sings.

Pat firmly believes that this attunement to her baby will help this mum bond more effectively with the child when it is born and possibly help prevent or reduce the likelihood of significant statutory intervention this time around. Pat also said it was great to see social care reports now talking more about the brain development of babies and how adversity can and does damage development.

Developed as a universal offer for parents, we know that LSSP can also work in a targeted way with families needing additional help and support. On the LSSP pages of the NSPCC Learning website, there are a range of resources and ideas as to how professionals can use LSSP with parents, including how to provide parents with brain-building tips that they can easily incorporate into their everyday routine.

It also provides you with some simple and easy to understand metaphors that you can share with parents to help them understand the science behind why these interactions are so important.

The York context:



We launched Look Say Sing Play officially in York in October 2020 although had been gently promoting it throughout lockdown. At the time of writing, about 400 families across the city are signed up to receive the weekly hints and tips to support them in building strong bonds with their baby. The launch for professionals was attended by multiple colleagues from Children's Specialist Services including several managers and practitioners so there are already those amongst you will a good knowledge of the campaign and hopefully they've told you all about it! If you would like to watch the event yourself, you can find it on YouTube here <https://youtu.be/WDd9hkMxK1U>

Our family launch was via Facebook Live and so far has been watched over 1800 times. If you're working with a family and would like to support them to watch this, you can still do via the City Of York Facebook page www.facebook.com/cityofyork The family friendly web page is <https://www.york.gov.uk/LSSP> and from here they can sign up for weekly hints and tips.

The parents and carers of every baby born in York are being introduced to the campaign by their midwife and at the 6 – 8 week visit, their Health Visitor shares some high quality resources with them as well. We are using a whole range of promotional channels – both digital and physical – to promote the campaign and we know we have reached upwards of 40,000 engagements so far. As a practitioner you can reasonably expect families with babies to have heard about this strengths based approach from which you could build.

If you would like more information and resources to support your work, then visit our dedicated practitioner webpage <https://www.york.gov.uk/LSSPPractitioner> which also features upcoming free professional development seminars. We are also really happy to come along and talk to you and your team about how you might build Look Say Sing Play into your work – please just get in touch via LSSP@york.gov.uk

It would be great to hear from you about how you've been able to support the campaign so that we can share good practice and encourage others to get on board, so please feel free to get in touch and let us know how you get on?

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I also wanted to include some information regarding The Island...



We just wished to send you an update you on the current situation with The Island. As I suspect with many services we have again had to adapt how we practice. Just to give you and update of what we will be

offering please see as follows:

- **Various virtual online groups, workshops and support sessions a week.**
 - **Parental virtual coffee morning every 2 weeks.**
 - **Competitions and Life Skill Award Opportunities**
 - **Virtual Mentoring via Zoom**
 - **Penpal Mentoring Services**
 - **Support Line 7 days a week**
 - **2 Support drop ins per week - virtually via zoom**

- Signposting to other services and information, drop in, resources and home activities etc.

- Food and activity hamper delivery service

The Island team will be working remotely on reduced hours at this stage. You are still able to contact us with any questions or queries via the following numbers 01904628449, 07595695559 or 08002926494 where you will be directed to the appropriate person. Please be patient with us we are currently transitioning to a new remote phone system that works for the whole team. **If your enquiry is urgent** please do call the Duty number on 07595695559 or alternatively we will get back to you at our earliest convenience. To any of our partners or supporters if you feel there is any partnership working we can do during this time, information sharing or offering anything that can support one another please do let us know. We don't want to lose contact with you all and know this is a complex time for all so we would love to hear from you.

So, just a reminder that Monday was #InternationalWomensDay - a day on which we celebrate the achievements of women all over the globe! Here is a reminder of some of the inspirational care experienced women including best-selling author, Jenny Molloy, who members of our Children in Care Council had the opportunity to interview as part of our Aspire to More Project. Her interview can be found here: <https://aspiretomore.wordpress.com/role-models/jenny-molloy/>. Please do take a look as Jenny, along with numerous others, talk about their experience of the care system and how they have gone on to overcome their difficult childhood experiences and achieve great things. Other inspirational care experienced women include:

- ❖ Simone Biles – Olympic gymnastics legend
- ❖ Marilyn Monroe – Actress
- ❖ Maya Angelou – Author
- ❖ Coco Chanel – Designer
- ❖ Lorraine Pascale – TV Chef and model
- ❖ Ella Fitzgerald – Singer
- ❖ Fatima Whitbread – Olympic javelin thrower
- ❖ Samantha Morton – Oscar nominated actress
- ❖ Tina Turner – Singer
- ❖ Pandora Christie – Kiss FM radio presenter
- ❖ Kathy Burke – Actress
- ❖ Debbie Harry – Singer
- ❖ Courtney Love – Singer
- ❖ Keyshia Cole – Singer
- ❖ Cher – Singer

Finally, please remember to share your thoughts on this blog and any other with me, your feedback is vital, is this blog useful?

If this is not, useful, what would be? I am always really happy to discuss suggestions for future themes

What is going well	What is not going well	What would you like to change
Comments		

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Dallas