



RESEARCH NEWS 8

December
2011

Recent publications, reports and on-going research in the Making Research Count Universities

Making Research Count is a collaborative national research dissemination network based regionally in the social work departments of the Universities of Bedfordshire, Brighton, Central Lancashire (UCLAN), East Anglia (UEA), Keele, King's College London, Northumbria in association with Teesside, Salford, West of England (UWE), York and The Open University.

All twelve social work departments are actively engaged in research activity, generating research publications, reports and journal articles, as well as in the education of social work professionals, both at qualifying and post-qualifying level. This *RESEARCH NEWS* highlights some recent or current research undertaken in the departments in our network. There are electronic links to the published reports or departmental resources.

Strength to Change: Report of the evaluation of a new initiative for perpetrators of domestic violence

This study evaluated a new service for male perpetrators of domestic violence that opened in Hull in 2009. The service was preceded by a social marketing campaign informed by research that aimed to raise awareness of domestic violence and promote men's use of the new service which was commissioned by NHS Hull in collaboration with other local agencies. Strength to Change (STC) is a voluntary service and men self-refer; the service also offers support to men's partners. The evaluation included interviews with men and their partners, with project staff and other stakeholders and analysis of project and police data.

Evidence that STC had achieved a positive impact on behaviour and attitudes was provided by interviews with partners, with men themselves and by offending patterns while attending the programme. The programme had succeeded in engaging a cohort of men distinguished by high levels of risk factors through an empowering, non-judgemental approach which emphasised men's capacity for change. Extrinsic sources of motivation such as access to children appeared significant at the outset and men with this form of motivation were likely to engage with the programme for longer.

Stanley, N et al (2011) ***Strength to Change: Report of the evaluation of a new initiative for perpetrators of domestic violence***. Preston: University of Central Lancashire.

Stanley, N. et al (2009) ***Men's Talk: Research to inform Hull's social marketing initiative on domestic violence***. Preston: University of Central Lancashire and Hull PCT.

Available at: http://www.uclan.ac.uk/schools/school_of_social_work/research/nicky_stanley_tab_profile.php

Analysing the nature of practitioner research

Ian Shaw and Neil Lunt at York have continued to pursue their research and analysis of the nature of practitioner research. It is based on a study of networked practitioner projects at Children 1st in Scotland. Most of the publications from these projects are listed on Ian Shaw's home page at

<http://www.york.ac.uk/spsw/staff/ian-shaw/>

A possible way in to this would be through Shaw, I. and Lunt, N. (2011) 'Navigating Practitioner Research' *British Journal of Social Work* 2011; doi: 10.1093/bjsw/bcr025. They anticipate doing a systematic review of practitioner research in social care for the National School for Social Care Research, and are in the early stages of fieldwork for a spin-off research project on social work research networks.

'Short changed': the risks of financial abuse faced by people with dementia

Having dementia puts some people at greater risk of financial abuse. For example, they may be less able to judge risk and may be exploited. 'Short Changed' is the title of a recent report about the risks of financial abuse faced by people with dementia written by the Alzheimer's Society. This report includes data from the Evidem study at King's College London drawing on interviews with adult safeguarding coordinators and research reviews. 'This was a very constructive partnership' said Prof Jill Manthorpe of King's. 'We were able to add a research dimension to the report and the Alzheimer's Society made good use of our interview guides and our own findings. Working in partnership means that our research also gets good publicity. We will be using this research in our MRC events across 2012.' *Details of the report can be found on* <http://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org/home/>

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Belonging and Permanence: Outcomes in Long-term Foster Care and Adoption

(2010) Nina Biehal, Sarah Ellison, Claire Baker and Ian Sinclair, BAAF.

This study investigated: how successful are adoption and long-term foster care in providing permanence and promoting positive outcomes for children?; and, what are children's perceptions of permanence and belonging in different types of permanent placement? The study compared outcomes for 196 children who, 4-5 years earlier, had been in the same foster placement for three or more years or had been adopted from care (either by their foster carers or by strangers).

By follow-up 36% had been adopted, 32% had remained in the same foster placement for seven or more years ('stable care' group), but 23% had experienced a placement breakdown ('unstable care group'). Foster care was very positive for the children in the stable care group, who were as likely to experience positive outcomes (in terms of mental health and educational participation and progress) as the adopted group. However, these outcomes were poor for the unstable care group, who had entered care at an older age than those in permanent placements. For this group, longer exposure to adversity in their families was not only associated with poor mental health but had also reduced their chance of adoption or of settling in a stable foster placement.

What's Going On to Safeguard Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation?

How Local Partnerships Respond to Child Sexual Exploitation

Sue Jago, Lorena Arocha, Isabelle Brodie, Margaret Melrose, Jenny Pearce and Camille Warrington
University of Bedfordshire

This research project explored the extent and nature of the response of LSCBs to the 2009 government guidance on safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation. Where the guidance is followed, there are examples of developing and innovative practice to protect and support young people and their families and to investigate and prosecute their abusers. However, the research has found that the delivery of that dual approach to child sexual exploitation is far from the norm. Findings are set out together with recommendations on how to ensure that action is taken, locally and nationally, to address this form of child abuse.

www.beds.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/121873/wgoreport2011-121011.pdf.

Using life journey mapping to explore young people's journey to the edge of care, UWE, Bristol

Jane Dalrymple and Barry Percy-Smith are currently working with Bristol City Council Children and Young People's Services to undertake a needs assessment analysis to understand better young people's journeys to the edge of care to inform service improvement. The research has involved working in depth with a small number of young people and families using a visual life journey mapping approach. Life journey maps are constructed with participants to capture views, experiences and critical incidents holistically over time.

The research focused specifically on common factors in young people's journeys to the edge of care; the needs of young people and their families; experiences of services; gaps in service provision and where interventions were most needed. The life journey maps were then used in a workshop with practitioners and managers to support learning to inform service improvement. Key findings highlighted: the need for early support for parents (with parenting), family mediation work, young people and parents feeling they are not listened to, the critical importance of continuity of workers; specific areas of support with psychological / emotional issues and the importance of ongoing critical review of children and family service system's response to the needs of children and parents. For further information contact: barry.percy-smith@uwe.ac.uk. **Recent publications** include:

Roulestone, S. & McLeod, S. (eds) (2011) *Listening to children and young people with speech language and communication needs*. J&R Press.

Oliver, B. & Pitt, R. (2011) *Working with children young people and families*, Exeter: Learning Matter

"Don't Make Assumptions: children's views of the child protection system and messages for change"

Jeanette Cossar, Dr Marian Brandon and Peter Jordan.

A team at the UEA carried out research into children's and young people's views of the child protection system for The Office of The Children's Commissioner. When children become subject to child protection procedures they are dealing both with the consequences of the abuse or neglect which has led to this intervention, and with the impact of the intervention itself. The researchers interviewed 26 children and young people, aged between 6 and 17 and living with their parents, who all had a child protection plan in place. The young people were asked about their perception of risk, what made them feel safe, how much they understood and felt involved in the process, what helped and what was difficult in the process, and how from their perspective the child protection system could be improved. A full report and a children's version of the report are available on the OCC website: http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_486