

# Ready to Relate

Parent-infant relationships are the foundation of early child development and health. Positive relationships help to give children the best start, but we know this can be hard and lots of people find it helpful to have support with building their relationship with their baby. We've been working in partnership with Bradford District Care Trust, and colleagues at the Universities of York and Huddersfield to evaluate Ready to Relate (R2R) – an intervention to strengthen parent-infant relationships

## HELLO



My name is Sarah and I'm a researcher at the University of York. I specialise in the design, implementation, and evaluation of interventions to support children and families with a particular focus on parent-infant relationships.



My name's Zoë. I'm a researcher based at the University of Huddersfield and my focus is on parental mental health and wellbeing.

Our team have been brought in as independent experts to evaluate Ready to Relate locally. Our research often involves hearing from parents and practitioners about their needs and experiences, and we then use that to translate into learning about how to make access to support, fair for everyone.

Often the first step in building an evidence base for health related interventions involves talking to people about their lived experience and their perceptions of the intervention.



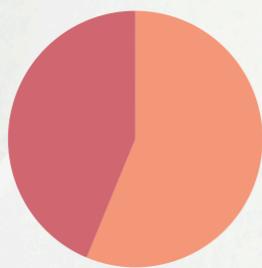
In hearing from parents and practitioners, we wanted to find out what they think about Ready to Relate, especially how acceptable and useful it is for different situations and different families, as well as any impacts, positive or negative, it might have.

We also wanted to understand how Ready to Relate might work and how it has been implemented and delivered in practice.



## INTERVIEWS

Practitioners  
43.8%



Parents  
56.3%

We interviewed 18 parents, including both mums and dads. Some were first time parents, others had older children.

We also interviewed 14 practitioners from Bradford who had experience using Ready to Relate. They included health visitors, perinatal mental health specialists, and peer support workers.

Some parents we heard from talked about how Ready to Relate helped them realise how amazing their baby is. They valued learning about baby's brain development and parent-infant relationships and felt better equipped to communicate with their babies and respond to their needs.

Several parents and even practitioners themselves described how they shared this, this knowledge with other people in their family too.

We heard that both parents and practitioners valued the bite-sized information and the visual nature of the cards.

Having photos of other families that they could relate to made it easier for them to have conversations about topics that can sometimes be quite difficult.

Practitioners also felt the pictures on the cards helped them with conversations when they were working with interpreters, as it helped to support in explaining concepts to the interpreter to share with the parents.

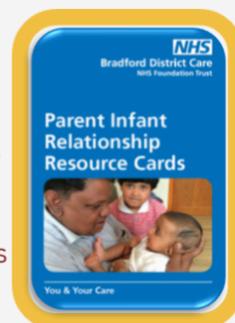


Whilst practitioners found that Ready to Relate helped them understand the further support parents may need and who to signpost to, importantly, the skills and sensitivity of the practitioners were essential for making sure conversations are helpful and supportive. Some practitioners wanted additional training to feel more confident in using Ready to Relate.

## Flexibility

Our research shows that practitioners do use Ready to Relate in different ways. For example, some use it in a one-off conversation and others across several sessions, including as part of more intensive psychological support delivered by specialists.

We recognised that we heard from practitioners in services where there was strong local support for Ready to Relate, and practitioners shared with us that they felt this helped when implementing it.



## NEXT STEPS



At the moment, the formal findings from our evaluation are being reviewed by other researchers. While we've gained some really helpful insights into how acceptable and useful Ready to Relate is, we're aware this is quite a small research study and we hope to evaluate the effectiveness of Ready to Relate and to do that with a bigger group of people and in other parts of the UK. This would also include numerical information as part of understanding the impact of R2R. Links to papers and updates about our research will be available through the Ready to Relate website.

Thank you for sharing an interest in our research 😊

If you have any queries in relation to this evaluation, please contact; [sarah.blower@york.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.blower@york.ac.uk)