



‘Daily Discussions’ to support the wellbeing of children and young people in Surrey

Interviewee: Helen Roberts, Supporting Children Advisor, Lead for CAMHS in Early Help Hub, Surrey County Council
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What are daily discussions?

‘Daily Discussions’ are child-focused, multi-agency forums to facilitate timely partnership working and collaboration between Surrey County Council Early Help, Children’s Single Point of Access (CSPA), Learners’ Single Point of Access (L-SPA), Surrey Youth Focus (SYF), and Mindworks Access and Advice Team.

The discussions are designed to bring the needs of young people to a multi-professional meeting and responsibly share relevant information, local knowledge and ideas to facilitate shared decision-making and support children’s emotional and mental wellbeing. It is also a place to escalate safeguarding concerns.

How did daily discussions come about?

The ‘Daily Discussions’ were initially developed by Nick Crippa (Early Help Hub, Surrey) and Bertie Matthews (Surrey and Borders NHS Partnership: SABP) in 2019/20, who were passionate about bringing together different services in Early Help i.e. the family centres, family support programmes and CAMHS. We initially met twice a week with CAMHS one stop in Dominion House, Guildford, so we could refer across services. The onset of the covid-19 pandemic brought new challenges, but it also provided an opportunity to expand the daily discussions and hold virtual meetings regularly. The ‘Daily Discussions’ developed at the right time, as mental health services for children in Surrey, were in high demand. We previously had caseloads of two or three children to discuss in our daily meetings, but now we have anywhere from two to sixteen children. We devised strategies to keep the discussions brief but informative in order to successfully gain an understanding about how services can be delivered to families, to best suit the needs of that child or young person.

How do you think your daily discussions align with the THRIVE Framework (Wolpert et al., 2019)?

Partnership Working: The daily discussions enable us to work in partnership across sectors, with children, young people, and families. In Early Help, we consider the child and young person’s family network, who is important for the child and who they have an existing relationship with, and we work in partnership to utilise and build on these relationships. There is real credit in working this way, as different teams have different backgrounds and depths of knowledge and we have learned the importance of drawing on and learning from each other’s expertise and skill mix.

Needs Led: Within the daily discussions, we ensure the conversations and outcomes are centred on understanding and meeting the needs of the child or young person. Following our discussions, the service which is already working with the child can take our ideas and discussions forward and discuss further what the child thinks would help them. This is essential because we recognise there may be a difference between what we as practitioners believe a child’s needs are and what a child and their family, want/need, and both need to be valued for a shared decision to be reached.



Accessibility: Holding ‘daily discussions’ builds capacity (with regards to skills and knowledge) within our teams, as we can learn from and draw on each other’s knowledge quickly. This improves accessibility to the different services on offer, being able to hold in mind the broader offer and allowing us to respond and help children and young people in a timely manner.

“Improves accessibility to services, allowing us to respond and help children, young people and families in a timely manner”

Different professionals may also have different parts of the child’s voice, depending on where they are working and this allows us to get a fuller picture of a child, their voice, their needs and wants.

Why do you think the daily discussions are successful?

“Working together and sharing responsibility, because the mental health and wellbeing of Surrey’s children is everyone’s business”

There are several things that add great value to the success of the daily discussions. An underpinning of what we do is **working together and sharing responsibility** because the mental health and wellbeing of Surrey’s children is everyone’s business. Building **mutual respect** has been key in allowing us to all develop trust in our work together, share our expertise, listen to and learn from one another, and crucially ensuring a child-focused approach is at the centre of what we do.

Ambitions: What working towards a more THRIVE-like system would look like?

Shared decision making:

- Attending i-THRIVE Grids training and continually working within the THRIVE Framework (Wolpert et al., 2019) to ensure children, young people and families are further involved and encouraged to take part in shared decision-making process.

Increasing collaboration across the system:

- Strengthening partnership work through an integrated front door that combines the SPA’s, all of which are co-located, to improve collaboration and shared accountability from the start.
- Integrating Front Doors – Developing a single point of contact for all services relating to children’s emotional and mental health, with one front door that includes Early Help, CAMHS, primary care, voluntary and education representatives, allowing us to build stronger partnerships and ensure teams collectively discuss referrals.

Outcomes Framework

Developing methods to measure the long-term impact of the daily discussion:

- By collecting stories/feedback from children discussed in the daily discussions, on their overall experiences and support received, to measure the efficacy of the daily discussions.
- Internal auditing i.e. frequency of re-referrals of children discussed in the daily discussions.

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