

SPHR Public Health Practice Evaluation Scheme:

Best Start in Life Alliance Evaluation

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The Beginning

- AskFuse SPHR PHPES brokering event in May 2019
- Wider team agreed to proceed together
- Assembled academic team with Ruth McGovern as PI
- Shortlisted at Stage 1, then accepted at Stage 2 (October 2019)
- 91 registrations of interest nationally - 1 of 10 funded

Background

Children and families in South Tyneside have high levels of need, with some children and families being particularly disadvantaged. The practice members of our team worked with local people to develop a new Alliancing approach to help children and families.



Brings together the different professionals that support children and families into one team
(Locality Hubs)

Identifies key people in schools to help children who have mental health difficulties
(Mental Health Champions)

Trains young people who want to volunteer to help school-aged children to live healthier lives
(Young Health Ambassadors)

Realist Literature Synthesis

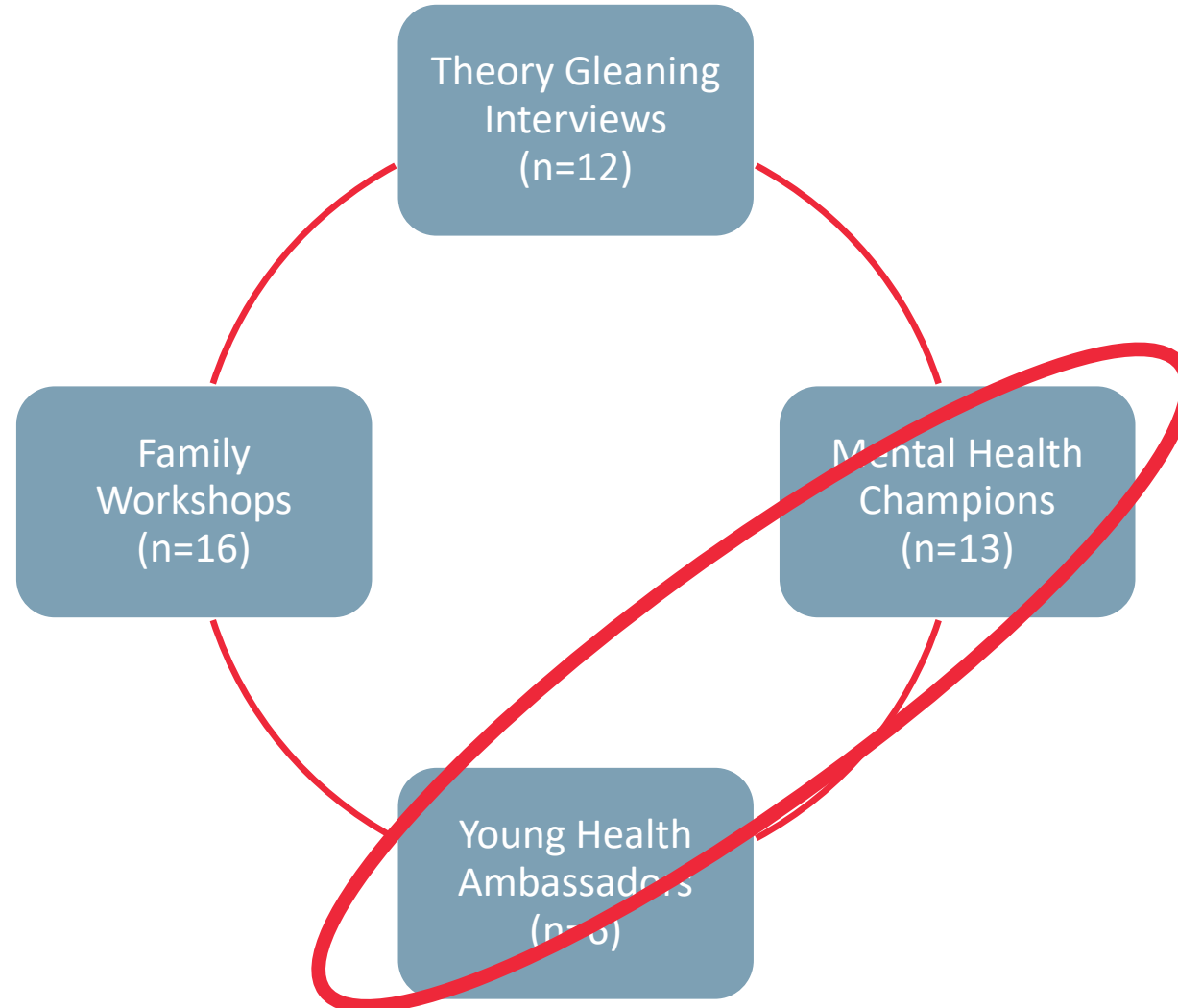
Identify underlying generative mechanisms associated with Alliancing; contextual conditions surrounding implementation; operationalisation of the approach mechanisms; outcomes produced as a result.

Three mechanistic components were identified within the data as being core to the successful implementation of Alliancing:

- A system level approach
- Local populations at the heart of the system
- Creating a cultural shift

The approach offers an opportunity to achieve system-level change with the potential to benefit local populations. The synthesis has provided insights into the necessary contextual and mechanistic factors of the approach, above and beyond effectiveness outcomes

Qualitative Data Collection



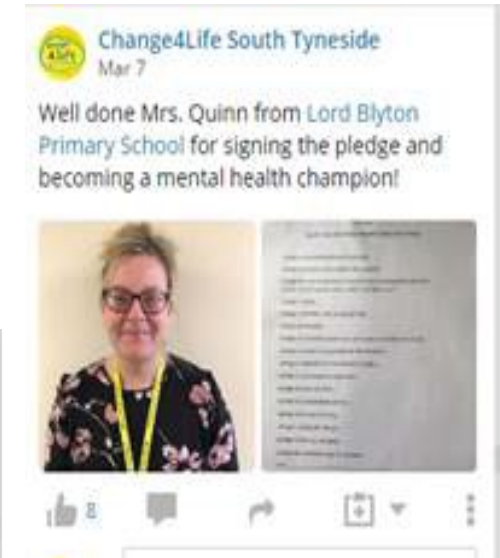
Mental Health Champions

The aim of a Mental Health Champion is to be the 'go to' member of staff around mental health in all settings that young people access, including schools, sports teams, youth clubs, mental health services and third sector organisations. The Champions wear yellow lanyards to improve visibility, and they promote themselves wherever possible. They have four main roles:

- To keep up to date with the topic
- To share any resources or information with colleagues
- To be the key point of contact for mental health service information to ensure young people and their families have the most up to date information about the services they access
- To offer advocacy for young people

Mental Health Champions

- A co-produced job description was created, a training needs assessment, and a work action plan which is updated every 12 months
- The network meets every eight weeks
- The Champions meet to share practice, and engage with a programme of events, training, and campaigns alongside the core business meetings
- Events and campaigns are run every year for Mental Health Awareness Week, World Mental Health Day, and Children's Mental Health Week



Young Health Ambassadors

Following the development of the Mental Health Champions, a parallel network led by young people was developed. They decided they would like to be called *Young Health Ambassadors*. This initiative was an entirely co-produced project where the young people designed their own programme and told the council how they wanted to be involved. The young people chose their name, designed their job descriptions, and identified their own priorities.

The Ambassadors have four main roles:

- To offer formal and informal peer support to their peers about low level mental health
- To run their own health campaigns amongst their peers
- To support mental health services to become more service user friendly
- To find out how children and young people would like to be involved and engaged in specific campaigns and service improvement

Young Health Ambassadors

Examples of work they have undertaken include:

- Delivering an anti-stigma event delivered to 100 young people and professionals;
- Designing a mental health anti-stigma campaign
- Delivering presentations to the Chief Executive of the Council
- Interviewing the Lead Member for Children & Young People
- Visiting the Sexual Health and Lifecycle Mental Health service
- Being interviewed by BBC Radio Newcastle
- Interviewing adult staff for health jobs
- Designing a Council Social Media Take Over
- Writing their own blog

← **Change4Life ST**

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Change4Life ST @Change4Li... · 16 May ▾

Health Ambassadors here to say thank you to everyone who came along to the Parents/Carers mental health event last night. It was great to chat to you all and we hope you took a lot of valuable information about positive mental health home with you!



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Change4Life ST @Change4Li... · 15 May ▾

Health Ambassadors just checking in to see if Tuesday Blues-day is beginning to fade away. Keep that smile on your face, spread joy and happiness all over the place. Keep sadness at bay, make today your happy day!



FIND YOUR HAPPY PLACE

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The logo for askfuse, featuring a small red and white striped icon above the word "askfuse" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.




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**IT'S OKAY
NOT TO BE
OKAY**

**It is estimated 1 in 10 young people have a
mental health diagnosis**

**Speak to your schools mental health
champions for more information or advice**


South Tyneside Council

Your Mental Health Champion is _____


South Tyneside
Clinical Commissioning Group



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Methods

Mental Health Champions

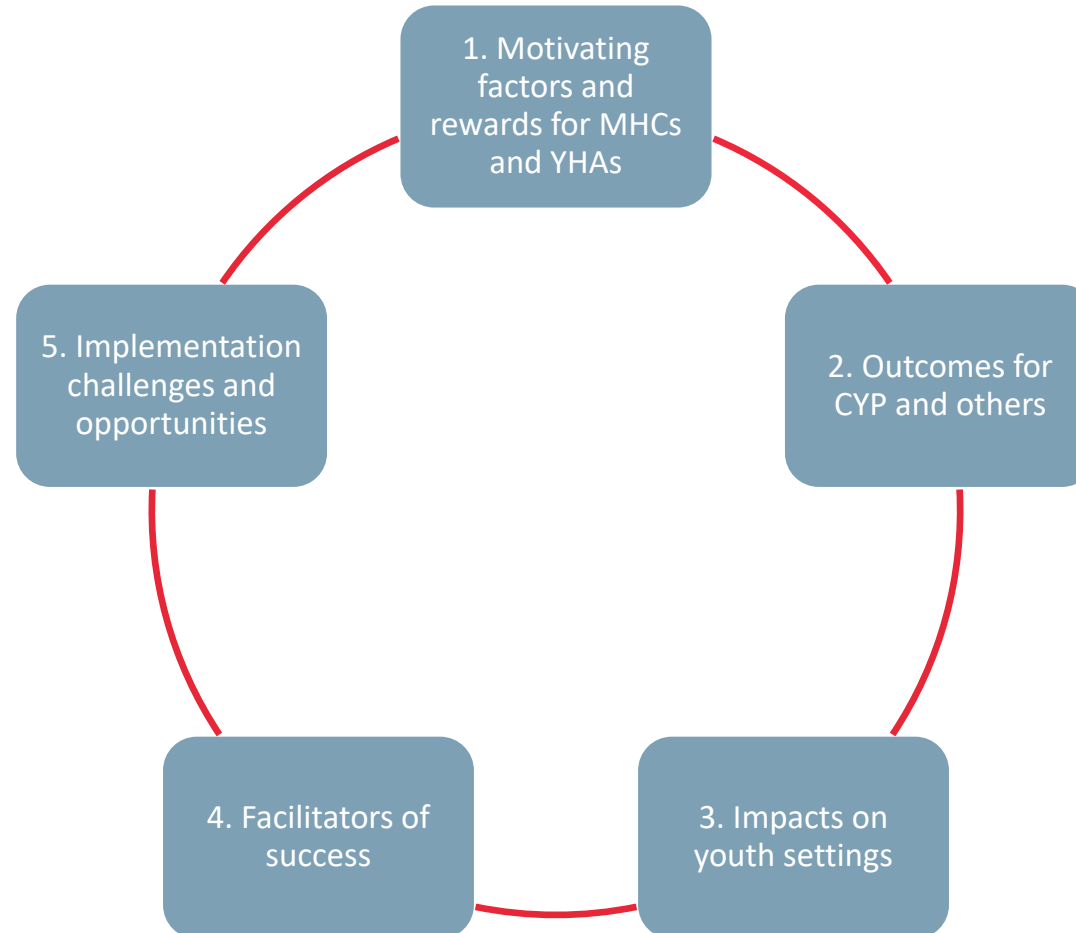
- n=13 participants
- n=9 female, n=4 male
- Teaching assistants, SENCOs,
primary/secondary class teachers, SLT
members

Young Health Ambassadors

- n=6 participants
- n=5 female, n=1 male
- Aged 18 to 21 years (median = 20)

Interviews with MHCs lasted between 20 and 42 minutes (mean = 33 minutes), and interviews with YHAs lasted between 23 and 59 minutes (mean = 37 minutes)

Findings





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MHC Quotations

“It is the impact that the role then has on my wellbeing and my mental health. Because I think if I was a stand-alone mental health champion, on my own, even at school...it is lovely that we have got the support in the local authority”

“Oh, absolutely fabulous, she really is, yes. Even in between the network meetings she’s continually emailing out sending resources, asking for ideas. She’s very active and she just supports you with anything”



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YHA Quotations

"I've always wanted to do more that I can add to my experience. It just sounded so interesting. I love knowing that there's a way to go out and help people and make a change"

"I think by introducing it in schools and across the borough, it's helped a lot more to make more awareness of stuff that people wouldn't talk about before, stuff that was very taboo"

Discussion

- Innovative public health interventions can be developed at low-cost by harnessing the interests and goodwill of volunteers, providing actual benefits for CYP in youth settings
- LAs should ensure that collaborative, productive and community-focused networks can be formed, and positively facilitated
- Securing engagement and buy-in from senior leaders in youth settings is essential
- A lack of time or limited funds should not inhibit motivated individuals from pursuing the implementation of resources and support
- The publicity of such interventions should be increased, in order to improve awareness amongst both CYP, and practitioners.
- Future research should explore delivery in a post-pandemic world

Moving Forwards

- Fuse Research Event and Blog
- PHE North East and Yorkshire CYP Leads
- SPHR ASM
- SPHR PMH Symposium
- **Paper 1:** European Journal of Public Health paper (Redgate et al., 2023)
- **Paper 2:** Journal of Children's Services Paper (under review)
- NIHR Population Health Career Scientist Award

www.fuseopenscienceblog.blogspot.com/2022/11/how-can-we-give-our-communities-best.html

www.fuse.ac.uk



South Tyneside Council

www.arc-nenc.nihr.ac.uk/news/dr-ruth-mcgovern-nihr-phca/

Any questions?



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