Bristol Children Exploitation Collaboration

Project update 25.4.22

Project update

➢ Stakeholder interviews, involving both statutory and voluntary organisations have taken place

➢ We have established a 'Working Group' who are developing solution ideas to test

➢ Attended Mayor's summit and took findings from the youth manifesto into analysis

➢ An 'as is map' is in progress and helping establish our baseline

➢ Core services being mapped to understand the pathways for children and young people

➢ Research tools have been approved by Barnardo's Research Ethics Committee

➢ Community organisations are being visited by the research team

➢ Interviews with young people and families being organised and starting last week

Project update continued..

➢ We have commissioned the Institute of Public Care to undertake the role of External Evaluators

➢ Webpage now live www.bristolsafeguarding.org/bristol-child-exploitation-collaboration
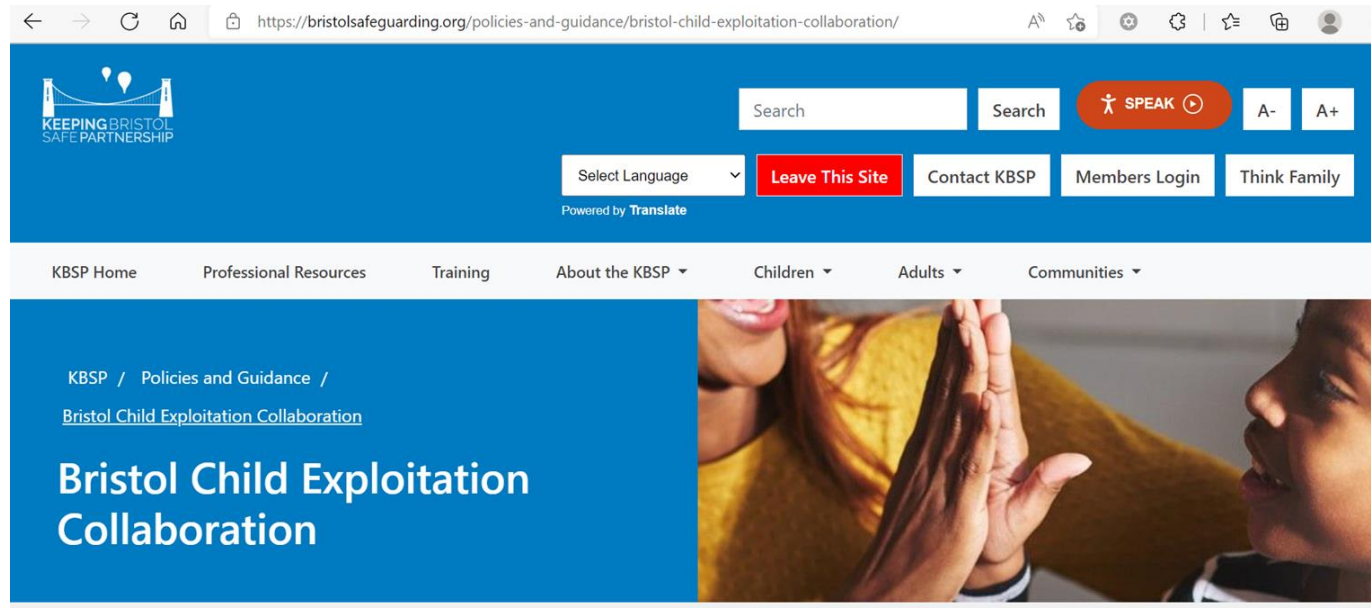
Problem statements

Overall problem statement

Services haven't always shifted with changing perpetrator patterns and overlapping forms of harm.

Abuse and exploitation can fluctuate over time and interventions are sometimes not nimble enough to respond to children being repeat victimised after period of improvement.

The key outcomes services need to achieve are:

- young people recover from exploitation and build resilience

-prevention of further harms

Currently, outcomes for children who have experienced criminal and/or sexual exploitation from services are not as good as we would like them to be"

Recovery & Building Resilience

How young people recover and build resilience is unique to each person.

Professionals often over rely on referrals to other services (particularly, mentoring services) as a solution, sometimes not fully understanding the specific needs of a YP and their preferences for meeting those needs.

In particular, the health needs around neurodiversity, speech and language, and emotional regulation and processing trauma have a large impact on recovery and ability to build resilience. These are often not fully understood and often conflated.

How might we better understand the needs of each young person and design interventions and support that meet these specific needs in order to enable recovery?

Prevention of Further Harms

Prevention of further harms relies on achieving the right balance between independence and protection, particularly, when children are 'active' in the harm they experience.

How might we achieve the right balance between independence and protection?

How might we protect young people from further harms?

Overall research aims
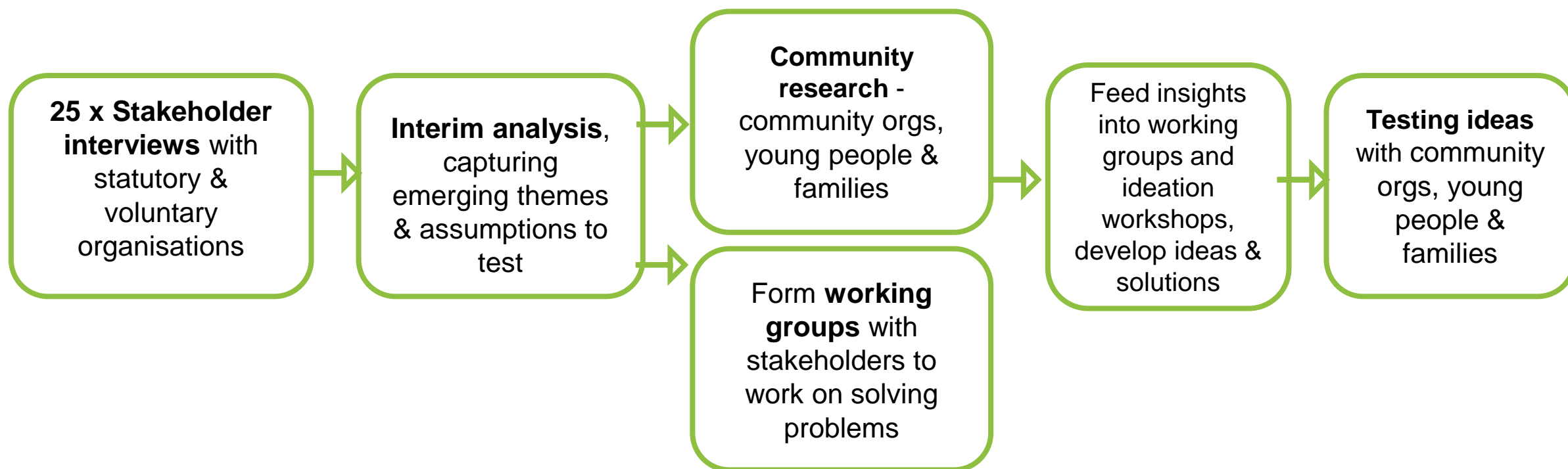
Strategic objective:

How might we design a specialist service model that meets the needs of children, young people, and families who have experienced high levels of extrafamilial harm and exploitation (including violence)?

Key research questions:

- What do children & young people in Bristol who have experienced exploitation or youth violence need to help them move forwards and be better supported?

    - How are resources (finances, practitioners' time etc.) currently assigned by the commissioner and commissioned services? Are they used effectively – for example, does the current system represent the best use of resources?

    - What are the underlying needs for children, young people and families experiencing extra-familial harm, and how are these being met currently?

    - How effective is the current system in meeting the needs of children, young people, and families?

    - What have young people and families experiences of the current services and system been?

Methodology for gathering evidence

25 x Stakeholder interviews with statutory & voluntary organisations

→

Interim analysis, capturing emerging themes & assumptions to test

→

Community research - community orgs, young people & families

Form **working groups** with stakeholders to work on solving problems

→

Feed insights into working groups and ideation workshops, develop ideas & solutions

→

Testing ideas with community orgs, young people & families

Research aims for stakeholder interviews

- What does the current system model look like?
  - Who are all the stakeholders and what are their roles/objectives?
  - What are the relationships between stakeholders?

- What do young people's journeys look like in the eyes of professionals?
  - What are their needs and how are they answered?

- What are the current interventions? What's working and what's not?
  - What are the intended outcomes and impact for young people?
  - Understand best practice approaches

- How do we engage children & young people in the research and co-design process moving forwards, considering their complex needs and traumatic experiences. How might we ensure it is a positive process for them and they feel comfortable expressing themselves and telling us what they really think?

8 key themes we've taken to the working group to explore further

- Fast paced nature of young people's lives **require a fast and flexible response**. Complexity of statutory services and the system as a whole slows down response

- **Short term nature of funding** makes it hard to form trust with young people and community organisations

- **Statutory-led** structure of Safer Options meetings makes it harder for voluntary and community organisations to participate fully, and indicates there could be a power imbalance between statutory and voluntary/community organisations

- Success of **multi-agency working** is **dependent on personalities** and individual relationships, so varies from case to case. Not having the right person in the room with the right mindset, experience and knowledge can jeopardise the quality of interventions

- **Institutions** are often set up in a way that incentivises professionals to focus on their agenda, not young people

- **School exclusions** are a huge driver for exploitation. While drug and weapons in schools pathways have been effective, there is still a need to address early warning signs that could lead to exclusions and tackle disproportionality

- The longer a young person is exploited the harder it is to get them out of it. The **focus on high thresholds** by services means that interventions are more resource-intensive, complex and less sustainable over time

- Not having appropriate services for young people **18+** means they are left unsupported and exploitation is more likely to continue

Support needs to be holistic

We took what we heard from young people in the mayoral summit and literature to define some of young people's core needs:

Meaningful activities	Positive relationships	Physical Safety	Psychological safety & emotional regulation
"Working closely with colleges (such as City of Bristol) to help them design courses where young people can get qualifications in their communities. Courses could even start on the street by engaging young people through ideas such as graffiti, barbering, music and other things that young people are interested in. Could pupils join during the year at different starting points. Could colleges be more flexible? Could colleges work alongside youth centres and bring in young people to help design courses".	"The negative power of social media around youth violence is so strong there needs to be an equally powerful social media presence of positive role model content" "More opportunities for young people with lived experience to become mentors, role models and influencers. Why can't college, schools, primary/secondary run a courses and programmes in leadership/prevention. This will help with confidence and skills"	"... more youth centres and community spaces, with increased opening hours and increasing activities that young people want to engage with." "Young people can get excluded easily which just sweeps situations under the carpet and doesn't address the underlying issues... If pupils in schools bring in a weapon, instead of excluding them for the safety of other pupils, that pupil could be put on an education programme with youth workers to help them and support them to understand the underlying issues"	"Mental health is a big thing. Young men especially need an opportunity to speak to someone so they don't get caught up in a spiral where they feel they have to or are pressured to fight back" - "More access to self-defence classes for young people based on real life situations. This could be about defending yourself but also how to defuse situations without the need for violence. Deactivating social media for example".

Working group developed this into a model of needs that need to be met:

Contributing needs (a gap)
- Neuro diversity
- Speech and language

A need for meaningful activities (defined by a young person)

- Sports clubs
- Dance groups
- Making music
- Gaming
- Faith groups
- Etc…

A need for trusted positive relationships with adults and peers

- Community guardians
- Youth and play workers
- Community and voluntary mentors
- Family members
- Access to peers (e.g. schools and activity clubs)
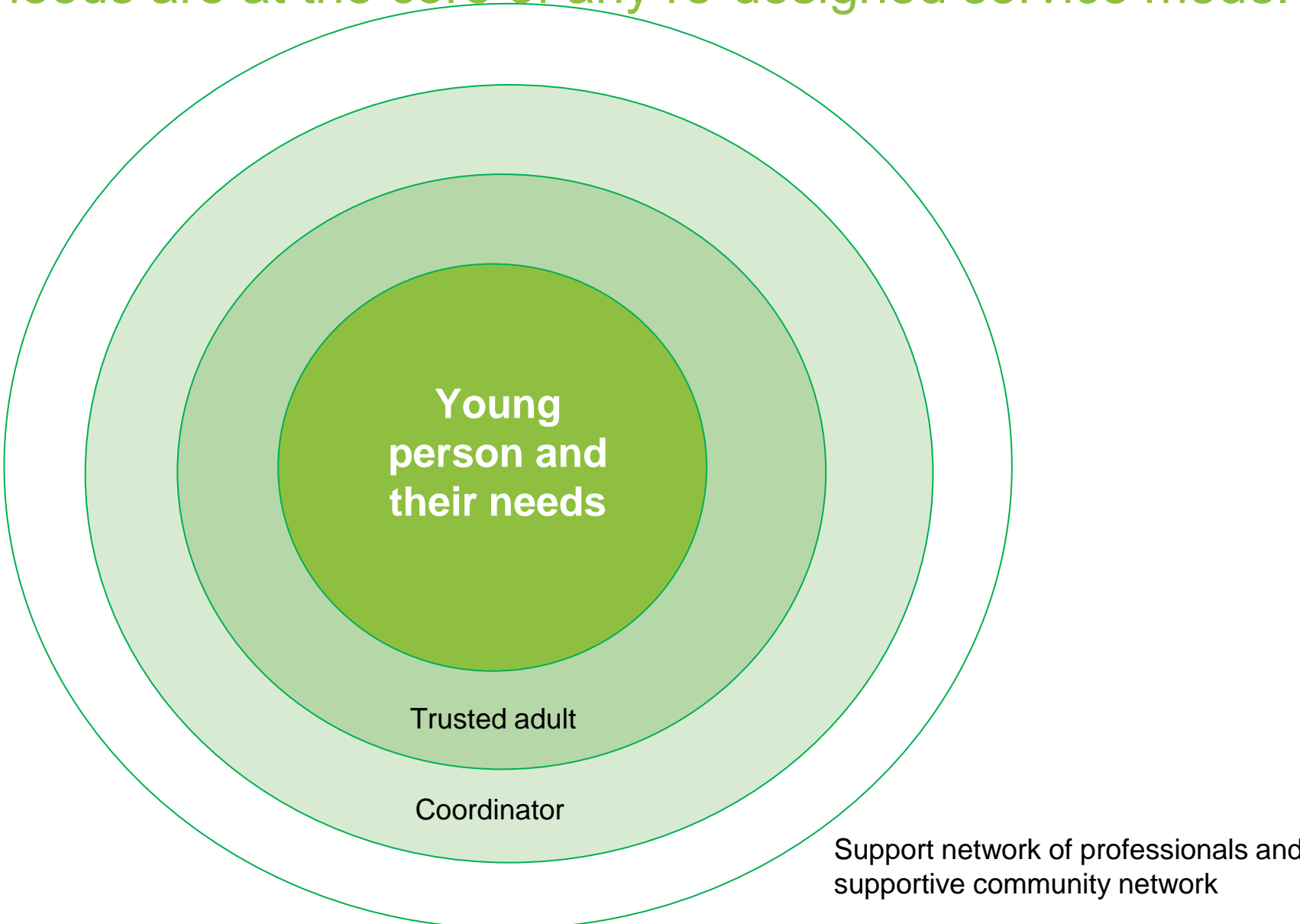
A need for physical safety

- Schools (a lot of school exclusions)
- Youth Centres (mostly closed)
- Community centres (not tailored to YP)
- Activity clubs (not open for long periods of time)
- Outdoor spaces (often not safe)

A need for psychological safety

- Positive relationships
- Factors reducing psychological safety:
  - Systemic racism (particularly schools and police)
  - Victim blaming (particularly schools)

A need for regulation of thoughts and emotions - mental health (gap)

Young person's needs are at the core of any re-designed service model

Young
person and
their needs

Trusted adult

Coordinator

Support network of professionals and
supportive community network

Research aims for community research

- What harms and threats are young people experiencing and what challenges are they facing?

- What are the underlying needs for children, young people and families experiencing extra-familial harm?
    - How are children, young people and families meeting these needs? What has helped them, and what are the gaps?
    - What do children, young people, families, and local communities need from services? What needs to change in the current set up in order to meet those needs?
    - How do these needs differ for criminal vs sexual exploitation?

- What have young people and families experiences of the current services and system been; how have they found navigating this (i.e. referral pathways, experience of practitioners)?
    - What do young people and families think is working well, and what do they feel needs to change?

- How effective is the current system in meeting the needs of children, young people, and families (CYP&F) and…
    - Who is this effective for / not effective for and why?
    - How supported are community organisations by the safeguarding systems in Bristol to meet the needs of young people facing exploitation and violence?
    - What do community organisations think needs to be done to solve the issues these young people face? What needs to change?

Methodology

Community organisation visits

Meeting with grassroots organisations across Bristol who are working with and supporting communities and young people

Family consultations

Discussions with parents and carers and in-depth interviews with siblings

Conversations with young people & young adults with lived experience

Conversations with young people and their trusted project worker - one to one plus some peer group workshops. Plus interviews with 25-30 year olds who used services in Bristol when they were under 25.

Engaging schools

Focus groups with schools - both state schools and academies. Plus visiting an alternative learning provision.

Community organisation visits

What we'll do

Visit community organisations across North, South and East Central Bristol, who are working with young people experiencing extra-familial harm.

Speak to team leads and youth practitioners about the work they do

Map out some of the core service journeys

Invite their young people to take part in research and co-design and approach that would work well for them

Visited so far:
➔ LPW
➔ Horn Youth Concern
➔ The Vench
➔ Youth Moves
➔ Bristol Drugs Project

Conversations with young people

What we'll do

- Interview young people who have lived experience of criminal or sexual exploitation.
- Include a broad mix of ages 13-25, mix of services, mix of background and locations across North, South & EC Bristol
- Recruit through community & voluntary organisations and ensure the young people give fully informed consent and have a trusted adult to support them
- Work out with community orgs the best approach, e.g. interviews / workshops / worker asking questions
- Provide food, and ensure young people are appropriately thanked for their time and feel valued (vouchers and thank you cards)
- Playback findings to them at a later date, so they can see what we've learnt, feel heard and see implications and change.

"YOUNG PEOPLE NEED TO BE ASKED WHAT MATTERS, NOT BE TOLD WHAT MATTERS"
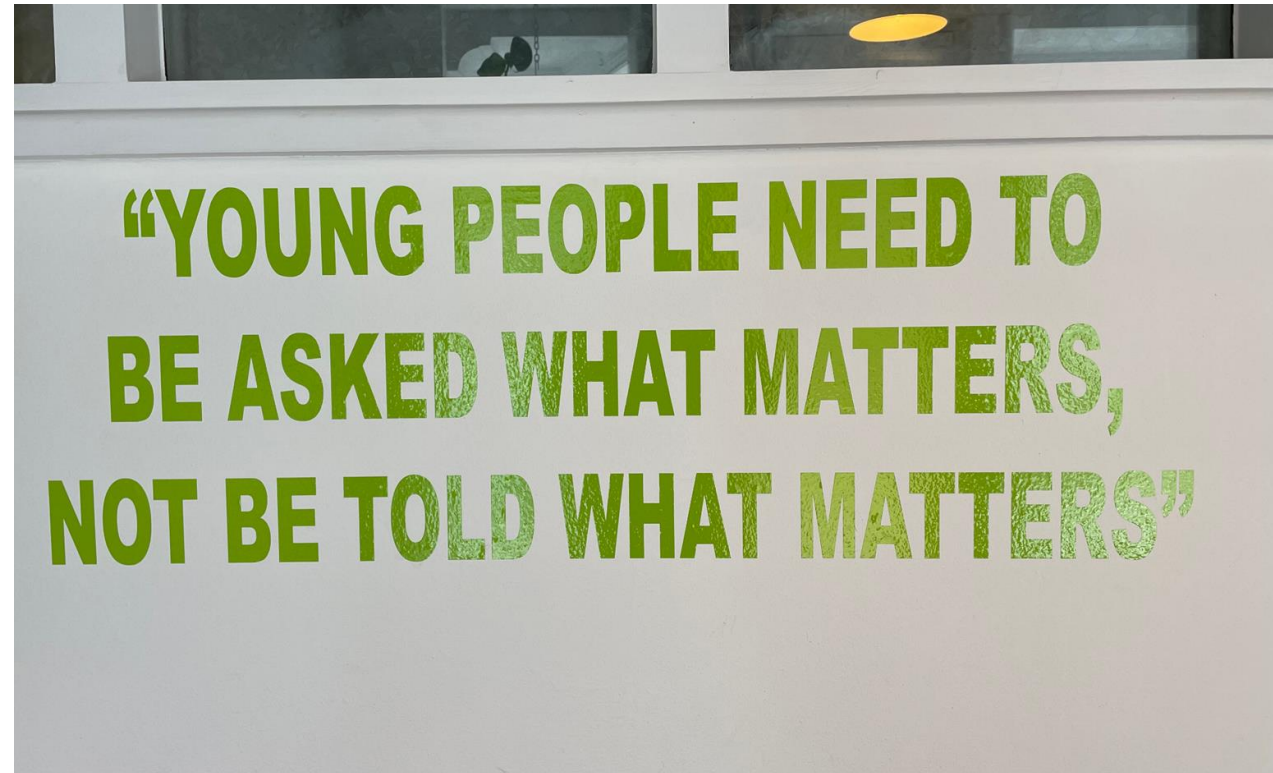
Family consultations & engaging schools

What we'll do

- Group conversations or in-depth interviews with parents & carers of young people experiencing CCE / CSE (depending on feasibility/what's appropriate) with parents and carers

- Run online focus groups with school representatives (tbc who - safeguarding leads / head teachers?) from various regions across Bristol (including representation from North, South & East Central)

Next steps

How can you get involved?

1. Please get in touch if you have young people or families who would be happy to be interviewed for the project, we can discuss the best way for them to participate

1. Please get in touch if you are a practitioner and would like to be part of a working group

Contact Details:

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