

Annual Learning Report 2022/2023



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Aim/objective

Document LEAP's engagement approach and explore the extent to which it was effective.

Introduction

Outreach and engagement with local families was a core aspect of LEAP's work.

LEAP worked in a focussed area of Lambeth from 2015 to 2024. The area was selected based on local need, drawing

on a range of local evidence that illustrated greater inequalities for young children in this area compared with the rest of Lambeth.

Participation in early years services is particularly beneficial for children facing disadvantage, but uptake among these families is lower than average.¹ If services do not effectively engage with families, the development and educational gap between children from better-off families and their disadvantaged peers may widen.²

Methods

LEAP's Annual Learning Report 2022/23 documents how the programme engaged families and explores patterns of engagement for different families and services. The report looks at:

- + LEAP's approaches to engagement
- + How effective LEAP was at engaging families, particularly those from LEAP's priority population;
- + Feedback from families about participating in LEAP services or activities

- + Outcomes for families; and
- + The extent to which engagement has been sustained.

To explore these areas, LEAP's research team analysed a range of qualitative and quantitative data from LEAP's Shared Measurement System. This included service reach and engagement data, service outcomes data, and service quality feedback provided by families. This was combined with NHS and local authority data using our Data Integration Platform to provide a clearer picture of who LEAP engaged, how, and what impact this had for them.

Findings/Results

LEAP reached 14,028 children and 15,254 adults from 15,374 families over the 10 years of funding. This represents an estimated two thirds of all children under 5-years-old living in the LEAP area.

LEAP engaged families using four main methods:

- 1 Direct recruitment by the service,
- 2 Referrals (from both LEAP and non-LEAP partners),
- 3 Signposting, and
- 4 Engagement of early years practitioners and settings.

Reflecting on this work, LEAP identified five key approaches for effectively engaging families:

- 1 Raising awareness of LEAP,
- 2 Outreach and recruitment capacity,
- 3 Responsive and flexible provision,
- 4 Accessibility of services, and
- 5 Building trusting relationships.

Who engaged

The families of 79% of children from LEAP's priority population in local Health Visiting data engaged with LEAP, compared with 77% of children whose family had no recorded engagement.

While 50% of all families engaged lived outside the LEAP area, these families generally engaged less fully than families

from the LEAP area (43%). Families living outside the LEAP area made up just 28% of attendances at service sessions, activities, or events, whereas families living inside the area made up 67% of attendances.

How they engaged

Community Engagement events and activities acted as the front door to LEAP for over 1 in 10 (15%) of the families who engaged with LEAP services. Families who first engaged through Community Engagement were more highly engaged participants in the LEAP programme, accessing more services and attending more sessions per service.

Family feedback

Families' feedback was extremely positive. In most responses, respondents strongly agreed that LEAP services were welcoming (93%), and that LEAP staff

were knowledgeable (88%), helpful (90%) and trustworthy (86%). In most responses, respondents said that they would highly recommend LEAP services and activities to their family or friends.

Medium-term outcomes

Findings also showed that LEAP services increased parents' knowledge and confidence about parenting; supporting their child's early communication, language and literacy development; and leading healthier lives.

Patterns of engagement

Analysis found that 23% of families used multiple LEAP services, rising to 42% among our priority population. The most common combinations of services were between those that are frequently delivered in the same locations and/or address broadly similar areas of need.

Conclusion

The LEAP programme was delivered against the background of declining uptake of early years offers, the challenges of COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis, as well as evidence that groups like LEAP's priority population are least likely to access early years services. The extent of our reach, and the findings that those engaged are representative of our priority population is an important achievement.

We are also pleased to show the specific contribution of our Community Engagement programme in both the initial and sustained engagement of local families, particularly those from our priority population. This report provides evidence that this approach is valuable and effective in supporting uptake of and continued engagement with services.

As a collective impact initiative, it is encouraging to see that 1 in 4 families attended multiple LEAP services over the course of the programme. Analysis of multiple service use data revealed some strong links between particular groups of services.

The themes highlighted in the report about the barriers and enablers to family engagement provide insight into the approaches LEAP has used to address these barriers, engage families and keep them engaged.

The full report is available at:

<https://story-of-leap.leaplambeth.org.uk/reports/leap-annual-learning-report-2022-2023-landing-page/>

