



MORE HUMANE, A CONVERSATION

A CHANGE IN ATMOSPHERE

CAMDEN CONVERSATIONS

OUR FAMILY-LED CHILD PROTECTION ENQUIRY





Contents of full report

Themes

Summary of Recommendations

Method

Introduction

Participants, Project Team, Project Support, Acknowledgements

Themes

Relationships

The Role of the Social Worker

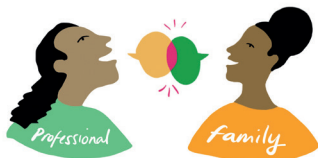
The Role of the Parent

The Role of Advocacy

Focus on the Child Protection Conference

Acknowledging the system does harm

Recommendations



CAMDEN CONVERSATIONS

Themes

Building relationships by acknowledging what is happening and acting on what is needed

Maintaining a relationship with good communication and good people skills - 'Worked with' rather than 'done to'.

Bring transparent and avoiding jargon when having difficult conversations

Building relationships by valuing and empowering families

Being caring, curious, holding people's life journey in mind

Inviting feedback on practice

Building relationships by lessening the fear and powerlessness felt by families

Recognising the importance of 'action'

Conflict resolution, and inviting both parent's contribution through being better at engaging dads and young parents.



Summary of Recommendations

There are many shared goals between family members and professionals to promote hopeful and helpful conversations that values the expertise of families with experiences of child protection services. Their recommendations are as follows:

1. **Develop “Independent Peer Advocacy”** as a preventative tool offered across Early Help, Child in Need and Child Protection stages, including at Child Protection Conferences.
2. A **review of language used**, which connects to the community and reaches out to minority groups.
3. Where timescales allow, **Family Group Conferences to be offered** and FGC Plan considered at Child Protection Conferences.
4. **Explore community venues, more flexible timing and role of peer advocacy** in Child Protection Conference
5. **Child Protection Chair/ IRO to meet family beforehand/ in between conference to encourage family input.** Including, allowing families and the Chair to be in the conference room first.
6. **Multi-agency professional to join the meeting**, limited to one professional per agency.
7. **Enable families to understand the Child Protection process** and timescales and allow Child Protection conferences to make time to make a plan.
8. **Identify creative and digital ways to allow feedback/debrief** with support from advocates.
9. **Multi-disciplinary Camden Conversations Training on “Empowering Families”** and consider ways to acknowledge the power dynamics between parent and frontline professional.
10. Look at **opportunities for multi-agency professionals to critically reflect on the Child Protection system**, how can we do better, what does a more participative process look like?
11. **Review support offer to birth parents**, before, during and post child protection stages.



A RELATIONSHIP WORKS WELL WHEN...

- You feel comfortable enough to open up and get the help that you need
- When people feel valued and respected



- You feel comfortable with the other person
- There is trust and respect



I had success the other day when...

- Someone showed genuine care and interest
- Someone listened to me and explained to me

- I had a cup of tea with a parent and let them say what they wanted to
- With my help someone understood what was happening



Most people think I am...

- Warm
- Approachable

- Kind hearted
- Approachable



I think I am...

- A good person
- Patient
- Doing my best

- A good person
- Kind
- Trying my best



Children need ...

Love

Love



In an ideal world a Child Protection conference would be ...

- Like a safe kitchen
- An opportunity for the **family** to lead the plan
- Including **advocacy**

- **More comfortable**, make me feel less vulnerable
- Like a **Family Group Conference**
- Giving more independent **advocates** for families





CAMDEN CONVERSATIONS

OUR FAMILY-LED CHILD PROTECTION ENQUIRY



What we hoped to achieve:

Camden child protection can change by being human

In an ideal world child protection conferences would be a conversation instead of a meeting



PROFESSIONAL



FAMILY MEMBER

constructive dialogue

Backstory: 2014

Family Advisory Board in Camden is formed of local experts by experience

2016: creation of the



Co-designed and delivered by Annie from Surviving Safeguarding

HOW CAMDEN CONVERSATIONS HAPPENED:

Parents are finding the Child Protection process very difficult

I feel vulnerable and uncomfortable in child protection conferences



PARENTS & RESEARCH FINDINGS

RESEARCH
Child Protection conferences are hard and quite official. They can feel very 'blaming'

Let's try to find out more - to help families take care of their children



Let's use Camden Conversations to start a participatory research project

A PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH PROJECT IS BORN

The TEAM



Annie from Surviving Safeguarding

Camden's

Family Advisory Board supported by social worker Tim Fisher



Professor Anna Gupta

CAMDEN CONVERSATIONS

coffee morning workshops



WITH PROFESSIONALS & FAMILIES

Starting a journey to a place of respect, learning and humane practice

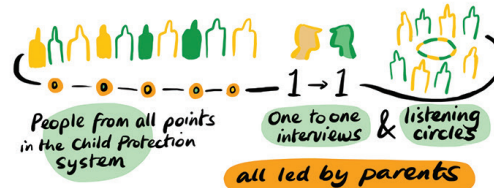
Important to acknowledge that the system does harm

We are travelling in hope based on good intentions of individuals within the system

"An appreciative enquiry"

Who & what is involved?

50 people 25 families 25 professionals



These all took place between September 2017 and September 2018 at OUR SPACES



I never thought I would be back in this office sitting down, leading this conversation.

PARENT FEEDBACK

SESSION FEEDBACK

families
It was **abuzz** asking the questions, I felt like I learnt and they learnt

I am **excited** to hear the outcome and recommendations of the enquiry, for me this process has already been a **SUCCESS** which has developed me as a practitioner

Professionals



Changing culture

Testing Advocacy Peer Support

Learning Exchanges Parent led workshops



We are already innovating!

HEADLINE AREAS FOR ACTION

- ADVOCACY PEER SUPPORT
- LEARNING EXCHANGE DEMONSTRATING FAMILY VOICES CAN LEAD TO CHANGE
- CP FORMAT & 'ATMOSPHERE'
- SUPPORT, INFORMATION AND OPPORTUNITY FOR PARENTS TO FEED BACK

Where could this journey take us?



MORE HUMANE, A CONVERSATION

IN AN IDEAL WORLD...

A CHANGE IN ATMOSPHERE