

Co-production Training July 2020

Developing a common perception of co-production in York

1. Why we did it?

In December 2019, a Local Area SEND Inspection was carried out in York; in February 2020 the feedback was received and as a result a Written Statement of Action was written by the Local Authority that highlighted four main areas for improvement. These areas were Leadership and Governance, Joint Commissioning, Quality of Education, Health and Care Plans and Co-production.

In May 2020, the Council for Disabled Children facilitated a training session based on co-production in York. It highlighted that there was an inconsistent view of the understanding of co-production and that the process of co-production was not embedded in York's SEND service development and delivery. However, it was acknowledged there was a strong desire from all involved to move into a way of working where co-production is a common process.

2. How we did it?

Laura Brown (Local Offer and Participation Officer, CYC) and Victoria Binks (Head of Engagement, CCG) planned and facilitated four training sessions across two weeks, including an evening session to ensure we could accommodate for all.

The sessions were run via Skype due to COVID-19 restrictions regarding meeting in person.

The objectives of the sessions were:

- To facilitate activities and explore the meaning of co-production
- To establish a common definition of co-production in York
- To address key challenges and successes you may face
- To provide information and share experiences of tools that you can use every day
- To understand how to measure success of co-production
- To develop a York-wide model for co-production

In the sessions, feedback methods such as Mentimeter and Google Jam Boards were used to ensure we could gather feedback from all participants without requiring everyone to speak.

Feedback was gathered based on:

- Individual and team understanding of the term co-production
- What is meant by individual and strategic co-production
- Feedback around the word co-production, do people understand it? Should we be using a different word? If so, what words should we be using?

- Barriers, successes and how SEND services can use co-production were explored using notes on the interactive sticky note Jam Boards.
- The Harts Ladder of Participation and an active listening diagram were received very well by attendees.
- Quotes from children and young people were shared about their lack of understanding when it comes to co-production, but the value they can see it having.

Do you know what co-production is?

“Not really, I was hoping you’d explain what it is”

What do you think would work well if we co-produced something together, between access4all and the council?

“They can have their own say in what happens and if they don’t like it they can change it”

The sessions mainly involved discussions between attendees and they became very valuable and gave us real insight into people’s understanding of the term co-production and how it could be embedded as part of every-day culture.

3. Who attended?

The sessions were attended by 32 individuals, a mix of CYC (15) and CCG (6) staff, parents (4) and secondary SENCOs (7).

The sessions had representatives from many SEND departments who are key in responding to the Written Statement of Action. In future sessions, they will be opened up to primary SENCOs and would require attendance from social care colleagues.

4. What we found...

We used an online interactive survey tool called Menimeter to capture feedback and understanding of coproduction at the beginning and the end of the session, to enable us to measure the effectiveness of the training. We asked the questions as a series of ‘I’ statements and asked people to rate how strongly they felt about the statements. 1= low 5 = high.

I understand the term co-production:

- The average understanding of the term co-production was rated out of 3.2/5 in the beginning of the sessions.
- Understanding of the term co-production increased to 4.4/5 by the end of the sessions.

I know how to use co-production within my daily life

- Understanding of how to use co-production in daily life averaged 2.7/5 at the start of the sessions, rising to 4.05/5 at the end.

I have the tools and support to help me with co-production

- One very interesting area that was uncovered was the lack of tools and resources or knowledge of where to find these resources were, in the beginning attendees explained their understanding of where to find this information was 2.25/5, this only increased to 3.5/5 highlighting the importance to continue with supporting staff and parents to understand the resources available to them

My colleagues/those that work with my children understand how to use co-production

- Attendees rated their colleague's ability to use coproduction as 2.1/5 in the beginning of the session however this increased to 3.9/5 by the end of the session.

5. Themes

Throughout the four sessions, a range of themes occurred and it was interesting to see each group focused on a different area, barrier or success despite the session being the same.

The themes included:

5.1 Honesty

Honesty as a concept arose due to a member of the CCG suggesting it would not be possible to co-produce from the beginning of a piece of work when it is a statutory document or service that is already decided on. This is a barrier to co-production however, it was explained how important honesty is when it comes to barriers like this.

Although it was encouraged to involve parents and young people in an initial consultation, and ask them what it is they would like to see from this piece of work, this may not always be the case but by being honest with those involved and talking through the reasons why, or why not whilst continuing their involvement in the project will ensure the individuals feel valued, important and involved in the process. A parent in one of the sessions said:

'Be honest, we know that not everything can be done, but if it was just explained what was possible.'

'It's frustrating as a parent if you don't understand why a decision has been made.'

The topic of becoming "gridlocked" when there is not a general consensus amongst the group was also discussed. It was a concern of some due to having quite tight time constraints some pieces of work have. However, this also came down to honesty and simple but clear explanations to all involved that a decision based on how and why a decision has been made despite not everyone being in agreement would resolve these issues.

5.2 Culture

Attendees were keen to move into a world and way of working where co-production is embedded as a culture within all our organisations. There was a concern that it is not a term or something people have come across before despite years in the service and the attendees saw real value for co-production in their work but wondered why it hadn't been

happening already.

5.3 Resources

It was a general consensus of the four sessions that it would be useful to know who to contact if they need to support when co-producing and to have resources available to support their work. One resource that most professionals requested was a 'checklist' that can be used when coproducing on either an individual or strategic level. It was agreed that this would be included as a part of the model of co-production so that those who wish to co-produce can use the document as a "bookshelf of information" and can easily access one part of the document to support their specific piece of work.

5.4 Relaunching the ideology

Across all four sessions, it was clear that the word co-production was not effective or understood in the way it was intended. Despite it being used by Ofsted, it was agreed that in York it is important a word is used that is recognised by parents, young people, schools and professionals. It was agreed that a new word would be decided on in York by giving this choice to those who will be using it via a survey, and then by relaunching the idea and the word, it would become a concept people will become more aware of.

"people don't ask questions very often"

"Parents are more likely to feel valued if they are involved and have their say"

In the future the aim in York is for parents and young people to know they are able to ask to be involved and know they can have their voices heard, so by relaunching the idea of co-production in York, we can ensure that those going through the SEND services know how to be involved.

5.5 Communication

Communication techniques and the language we use when communicating with parents was also a topic that attendees felt very passionate about. It was also agreed that listening is a key component in effective communication, and the groups were reflecting on how they listen to people and how to be the best kind of listener. There was an agreement from the group that often professionals often believe they are co-producing and listening however often have a set of answers they want to hear when asking a question. It is important to leave a question open and bounce off what individuals are saying to develop a plan and services.

These are just some quotes taken from the session around communication:

"There is a necessity for plain speaking"

"Making it easier to read, will make it easier for everyone"

"Take it right back to basic – explain the acronym and jargon"

“Make sure that communication materials are done in different ways – no jargon, different format”

“Need more thought around communication and sharing ideas”

It was made clear that the use of acronyms, professionals wording and particular ways of communicating often felt exclusive despite our aim as a Local Authority to be inclusive to all. The language used as a local authority is key to ensuring we value the importance of parents. Including parents and young people by using language that is understood by all will increase the confidence parents and young people have in the services we provide. It is important to check back with parents and young people to make sure they understand and they are confident and ready to move to the next step of the process they are involved in.

In another consultation with children and young people, a young person explained how he felt about communication from professionals and how he felt it could be improved:

“It all depends on the language, and if we can understand it”

6. Barriers

It was evident that there are many things which are considered to be barriers to co-production and potentially being used as reasons not to use co-production in service development and delivery. The most common being time, money, attitude, creativity and imagination however, in the upcoming sessions these can be discussed and between the groups, these barriers can be overcome.

Session 1



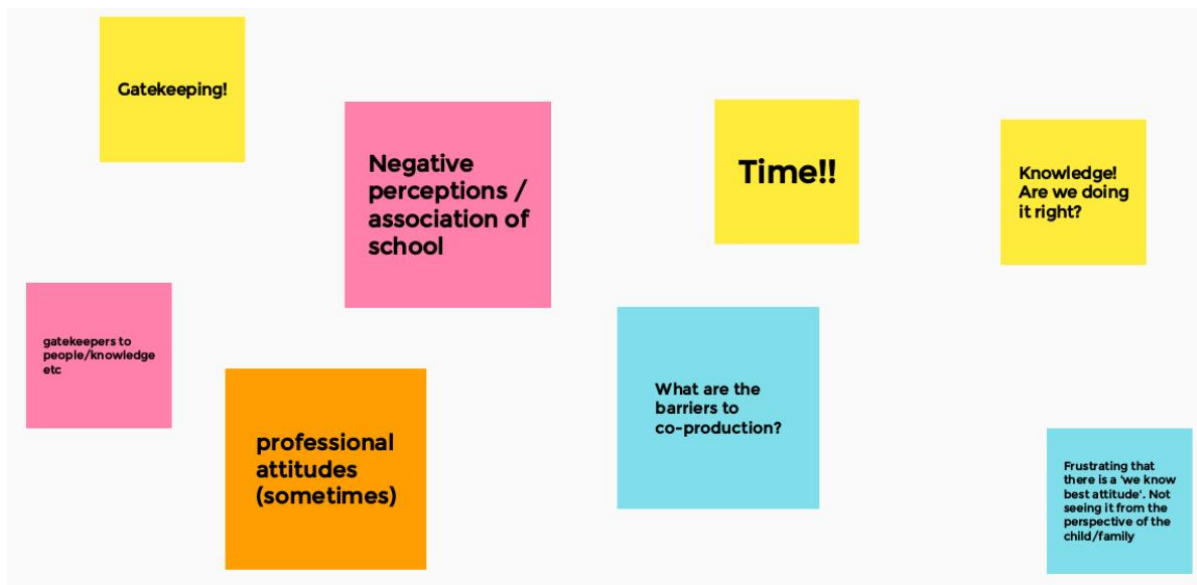
Session 2



Session 3



Session 4



7. Successes of co-production

Although co-production was not a process that all attendees were already doing in their service and despite the highlighted barriers, it was clear that they know the benefits and what positive outcomes could be possible by working in this way. Below are the Google Jam Boards from each session regarding successes of co-production:

Session 1



Session 2



Session 3



Session 4



8. Pledges

During the sessions, the attendees were asked to make a personal pledge on how they will use co-production or how they will use the information from the session to develop their service or relationship with families and professionals.

I will now ask for student feedback after 6 sessions of ASC mentoring - to find out whether the student finds it useful or are we just box ticking.	I am participating in this training as part of a wider team. Once all colleagues have attended i will ensure that co-production is on the agenda at the next team meeting to explore level of participation and how we can improve as a team.	Make myself available to support colleagues if needed. Continue to look for opportunities in my day to day role. Feed into CYC Comms Strategy - build in appropriate measures
look at how each intervention includes co-production. Acknowledge barriers with colleagues but recognise that this doesn't mean that we don't do it. ask why not rather than why	ensure we are really engaging children and families in our service and how it is delivered. to do this i will ensure my team understand and are engaged to support the children and families we work with	Ensure that the 'child-centred' approach to supporting pupils with additional needs is always upheld. Ensure that the questions asked in collecting student voice are relevant and suitable to inform planning .Ensure excellent communication.
-share slides/ training from session with teams to help increase staff understanding to co- production -look at how best to embed further in service development- explore tools	talk to colleagues about the work that is going on in the city - we do use regular outcome measures within camhs which seek feedback from young people and families on a regular basis.	Work with Schools to ensure the voice of children is a focus throughout the EHCP
Work with the team in school to improve coproduction	ensure we always build in time to ensure coproduction is done effectively	I will embed this as a standard within all aspects of my work
Promote and support a whole school ethos.	Try to have a parent on our interview panels	Listen actively and share information with everyone involved with the child/young person and family
Get more feedback from parents in my support group as to what they would like so we can feed that back	Ensure that I will drive the voice of children and their families in my practice and through the meetings and steering groups that i participate in	Really listen Check back to ensure I'm feeding back their true views and wishes
be more focused (and creative) how my daughter involved in decision-making	Keep co-production to the fore in all projects	help develop the Down syndrome pathway with co-production at the forefront of our minds
Think about what kind of listener I am, consider how support needs to look to make sure children, young people and families can be fully involved before meetings	Explain to other people what it means in my teams (work), keep myself more informed about projects and help communicate them (work) listen more carefully to my son and encourage him to always give his views (home)	Share today's learning with my teams. Increase user feedback and acting on this. Involve CYP at every stage
listen and respect the opinions of others and endeavour to speak plainly all the time!	be challenging language that excludes and seeking ways to include	

9. What next

- The Model of co-production will be written and will outline what co-production is, why it is needed in York, and how it can be possible to co-produce on an individual level and a strategic level.
- The model will include a “checklist” to allow colleagues to consider when they are co-producing so that they can have ideas and ensure they have effectively co-produced
- There will be quarterly sessions positively received and will be planned throughout the upcoming years
- There will be consistent support on the co-production forum: <https://send-co-production-in-york.mobilize.io/registrations/groups/41654>
- (If you have any issues registering for the forum, please contact Laura.Brown@york.gov.uk)

10. Resources

Image A

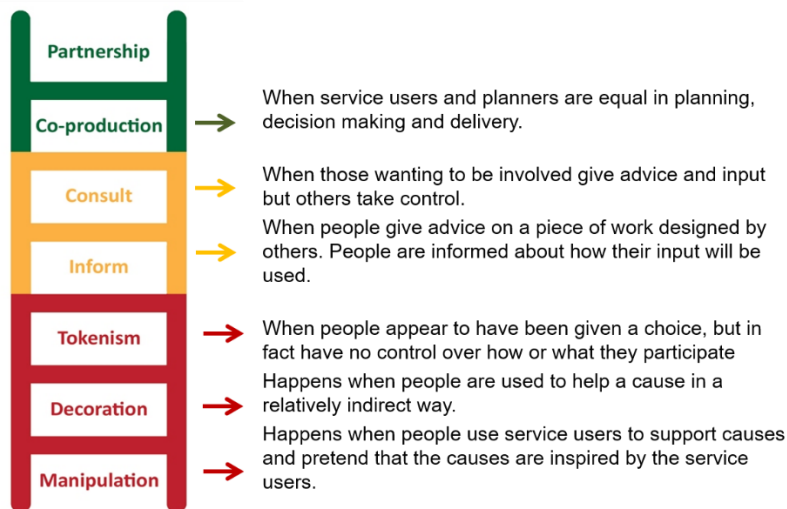


Image B

