

The voices of young people and practitioners:

Parental substance use, resilience and stigma

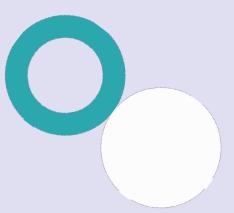
Cassey Muir, Aiden Quinn & Kira Terry
NIHR SPHR PhD Researcher and Lived Experience Experts



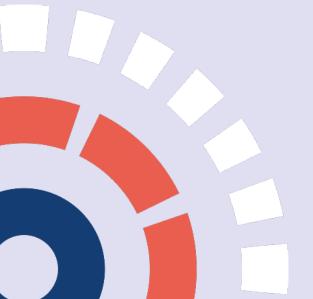




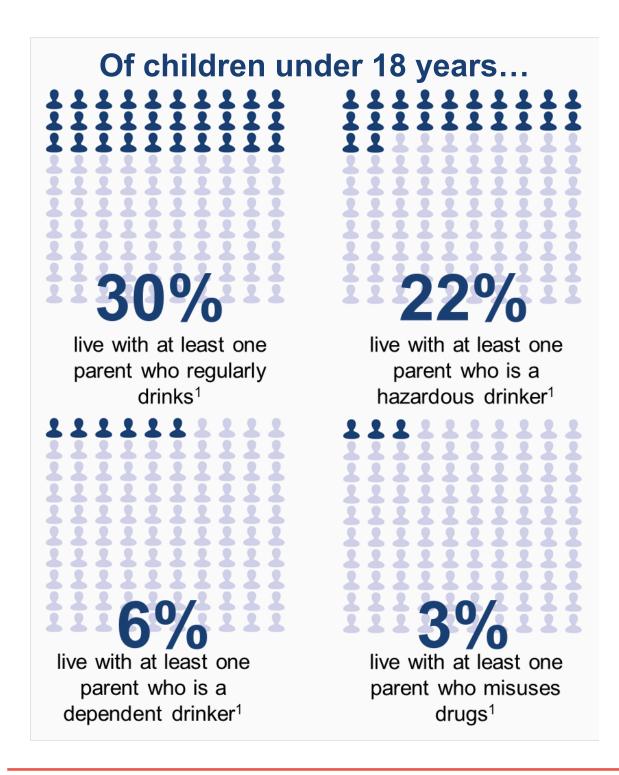




Background

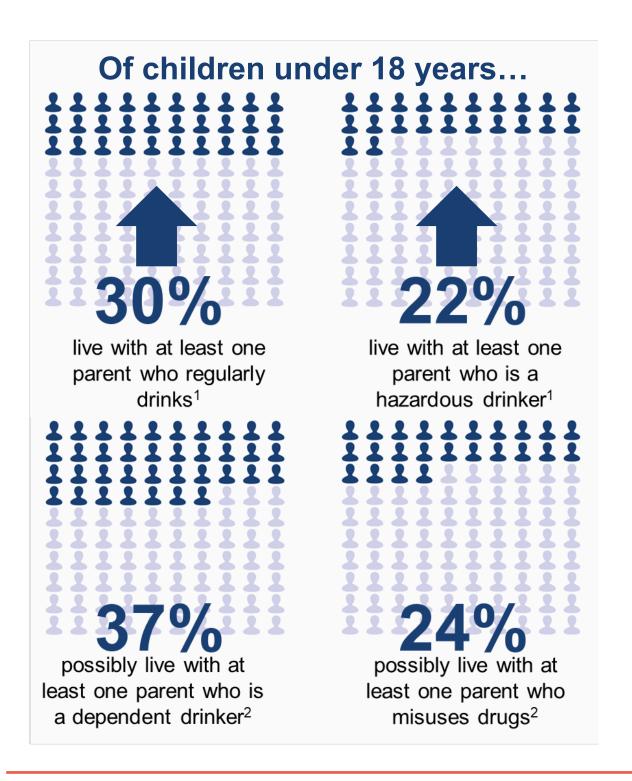


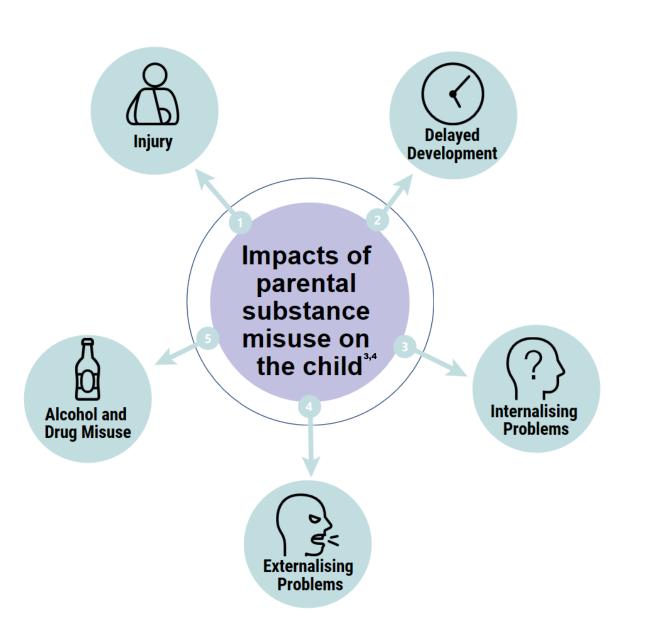
Why is it important to understand young people's views?





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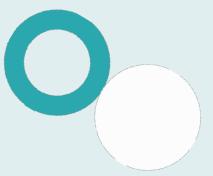


Help to develop child-focused interventions that promote resilience and reduce stigma









Methods



An overview of the project

THE SPRING STUDY
STUDY EXPLORING PARENTAL SUBSTANCE USE AND
RESILIENCE IN YOUNG PEOPLE

- 1. Qualitative Systematic Review
- 2. Interviews with Young People
- 3. Interviews with Practitioners

YP Advisory Group & Practice Advisors





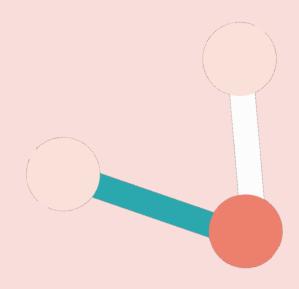
Remote Interviews & Fieldwork

- COVID-19 pandemic & multiple national lockdowns
- Mainly young people (YP) already involved with support services and their practitioners
- Open coding of 5 YP interviews (YP advisory group)
- Applied coding framework to the rest of interviews

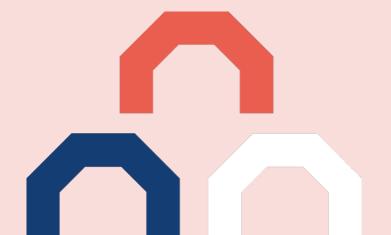




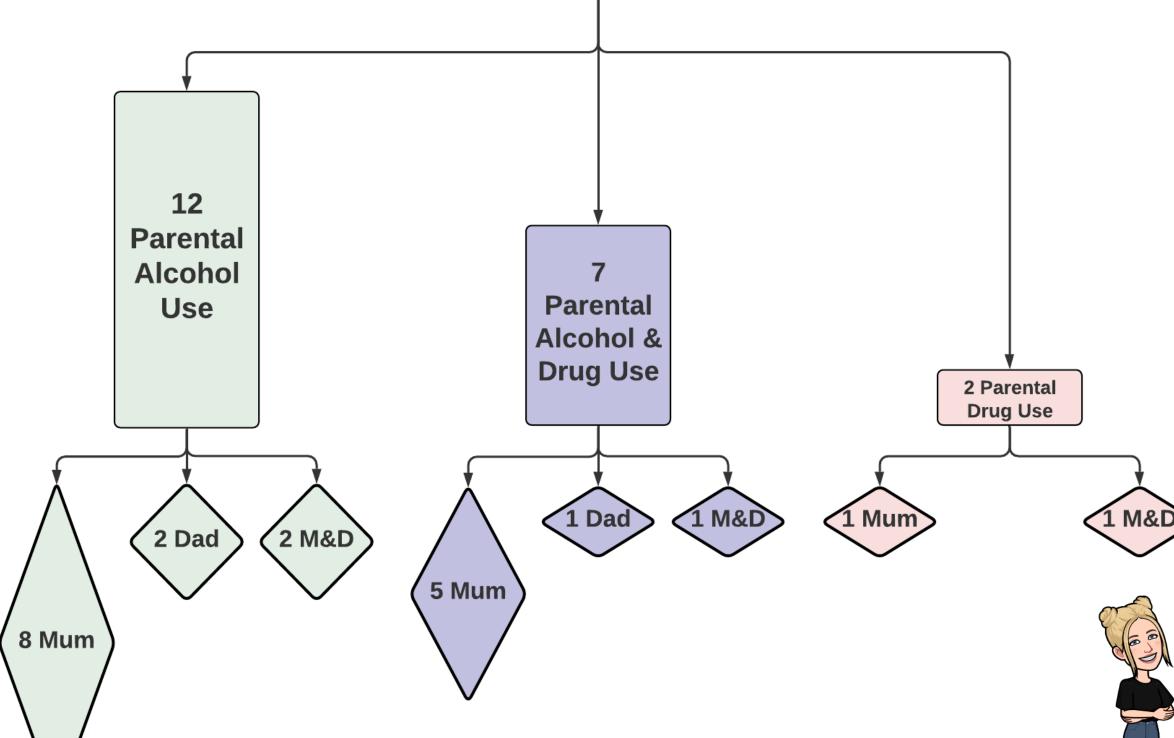




Findings



21 Young People (14-24 years)



Young People:

- 13 female
- 6 male
- 2 transgender
- 18 White British
- 3 BAME
- 20 Families
- 10 Services
- 6 Regions in England











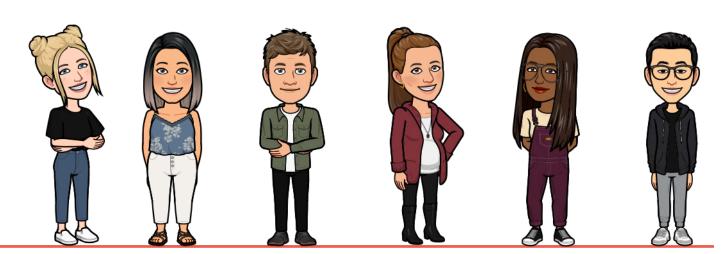


44 Practitioners

from 32 Services across 8 Regions in England

31 Frontline, 5 Team Leaders, 6 Managers, 1 Safeguarding Lead, 1 Commissioner

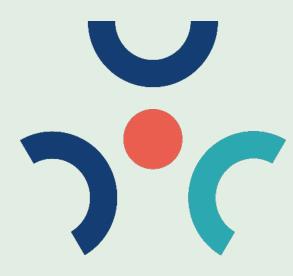
Mainly YP Drug & Alcohol Services with specialist support for 'affected others' but also Adult Services, Integrated Services, Family Services, Young Carer Services, Social Care Services, and Local Authority











Themes





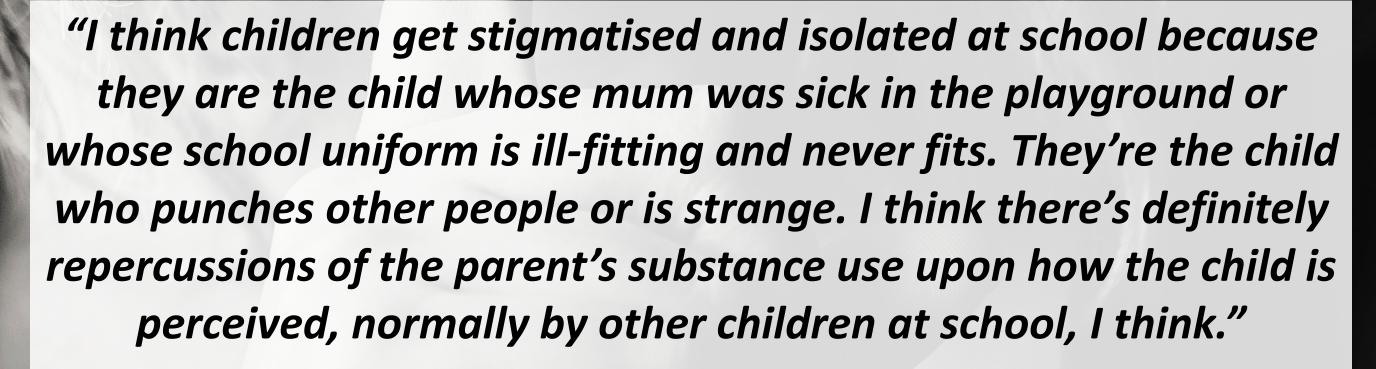
Themes

- 1. A secret identity Stigma, prejudice and shame
- 2. Resilience Surviving or thriving (agency and choice)
- 3. Lockdown Feeling trapped
- 4. Professionals Not always supportive



"I'm pretty alright to tell people about my experiences now because I'm not embarrassed anymore. At first I was, I was embarrassed of [my parents] but I realised their actions and what they've done don't define me and don't make me as a person."

- Josh (17) Mum & Dad's Alcohol & Drug Use



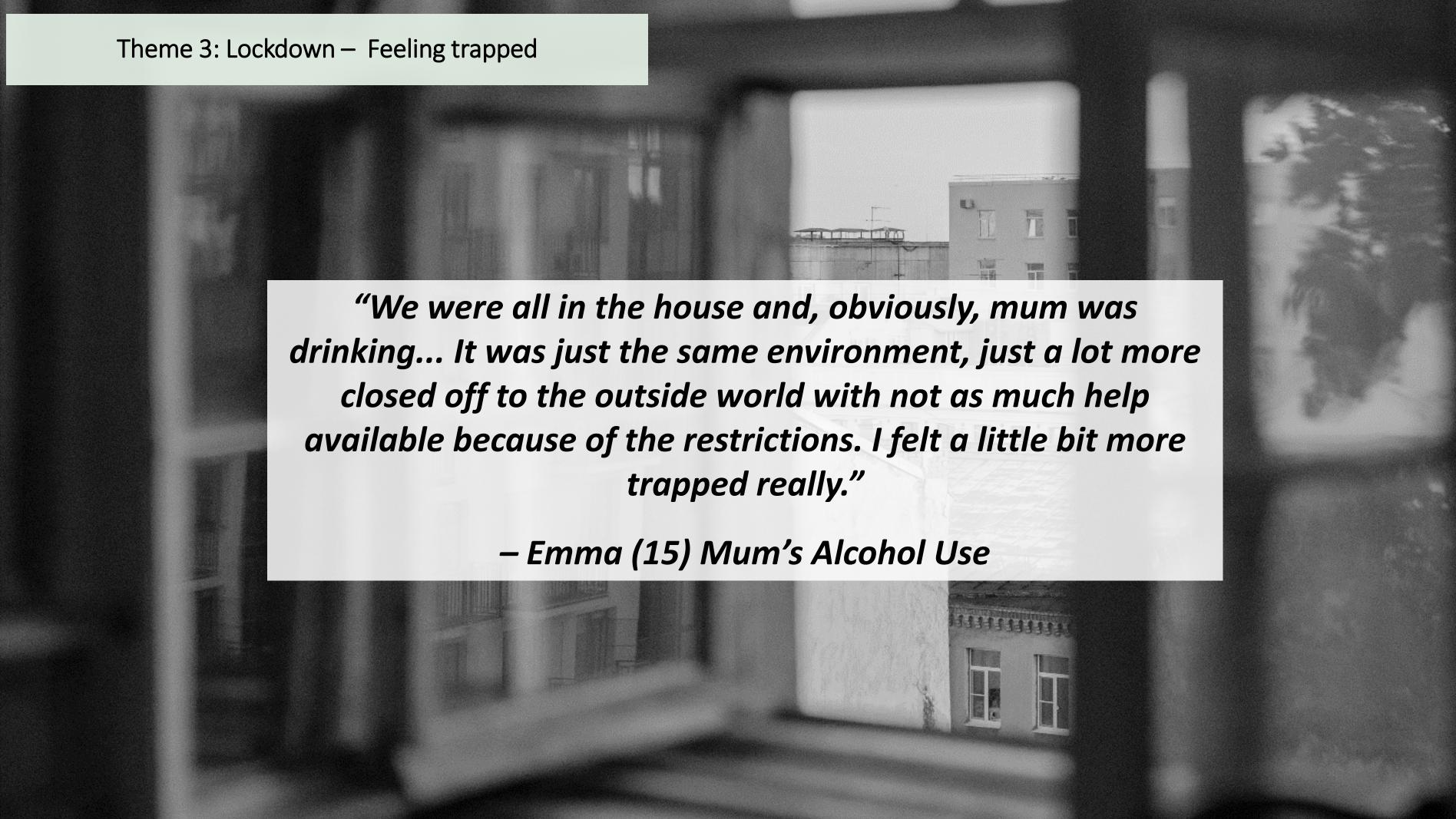
- Practitioner (Social Care Service)

"I think a lot of people say, "Oh, they're a very resilient young person, they're still going to school," but we don't know what's going on underneath. I think resilient behaviours don't necessarily mean they're resilient, it means they've learnt to put a mask on it and to show resilient behaviours, but actually, what's happening inside"

- Practitioner (YP Drug & Alcohol Service)

"[When I was younger] I was living alongside [my mum's alcohol use] and I knew that I just had to stick it out. She got worse and I got more resistant to it... Now, I've just got ambitions and aspirations because I think I know how tough life can be. I've always had to build and fight for my own thing, so I'm going to continue to do that."

- Daisy (18) Mum's Alcohol Use



"What families and carers are seeing is, particularly during lockdown it's been a real struggle, there's increased tension in the house, poverty, the increase in domestic violence has been massively significant. Supporting young people during lockdown has also been very difficult, because you can't have a telephone conversation with someone, when the other person is sitting in the next-door room; that kind of support has been difficult."

- Practitioner (Local Authority: Commissioning of Services)

"I wasn't that happy because the [support worker] told me that they weren't going to tell my mum [about what I told them] without my notice first. But I got home and they had already told her, so I was quite annoyed and not prepared... I came in and got a complete ear battering."

- Alfie (16) Mum's Alcohol Use

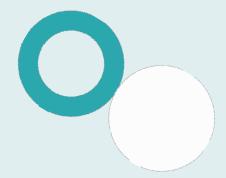
"I don't enjoy family [support] personally, because it's just a bit awkward. Just with my mam, it's just a bit much I think because how much can we say without it having an effect on later [at home]."

- Sophie (20) Mum's Alcohol Use

"Something that young people have told me over and over again is, certainly when they were in primary school, of schools knowing what was going on but not doing anything. It's just they didn't know what to do. It usually happens when they go to secondary school, something happens or there's a crisis. It always has to be a crisis."

- Practitioner (Young Carers Service)



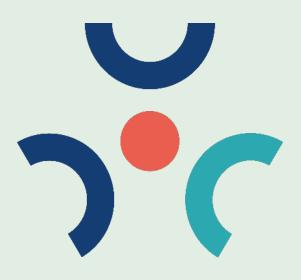


Aiden

Young person's lived experience of parental substance use







Themes continued...

5. Filling the Gaps:

- a) Young People's Needs
- b) Practitioner's Needs

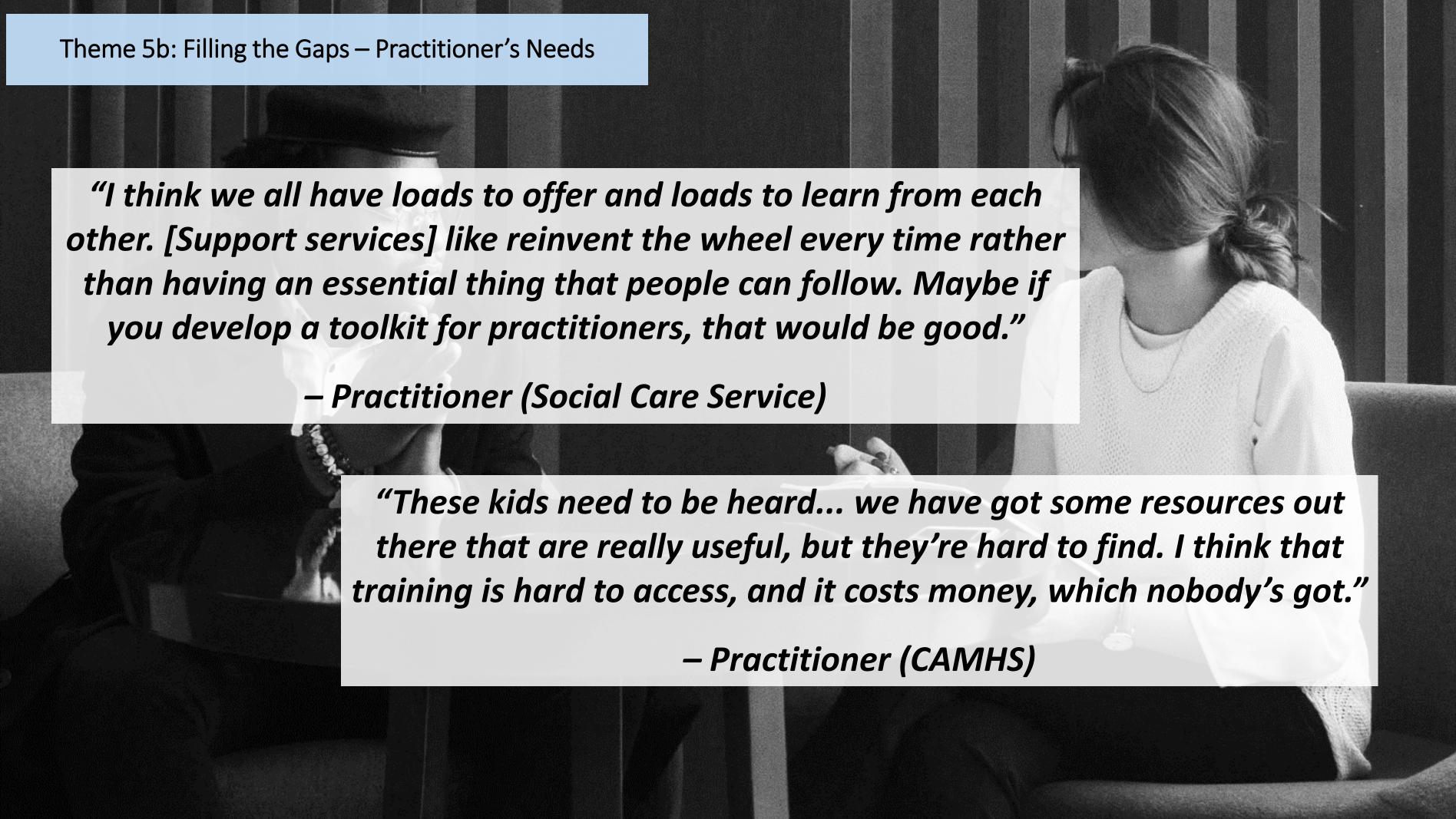


"I never really saw anyone come into school and talk to a vast majority of people, you know what I mean. So I never saw anyone come out and talk about drug and alcohol misuse but, like, within the home."

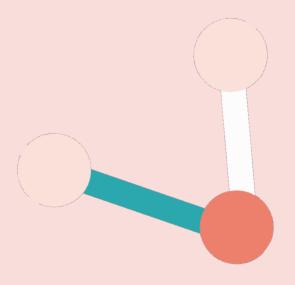
- Josh (17) Mum & Dad's Alcohol & Drug Use

"It was the most amazing thing the first time that I realised that I wasn't the only one that was like this. No one in the media says it. It's not talked about. It can feel really isolating when you don't know that there's anyone else out there. But having other people know that experience, and know it's scary helps so unbelievably much."

- Anna (17) Mum's Alcohol & Drug Use

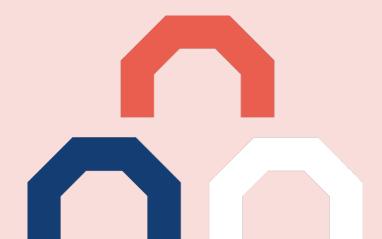






Kira

Young peoples' views on what we should develop to support young people whose parents use substances





4 Main Take-Home Points

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- 1. Current services need to think about how they can engage young people: (1) from ethnic minority communities; (2) impacted by fathers use; and (3) who are male
- 2. Young people have a secret identity they feel they need to hide for feelings of shame and experienced prejudice
- 3. More needs to be done to help young people seek support e.g. reduce stigma, increase resilience/ability to thrive
- 4. A shared learning toolkit or resource needs to be developed for practitioners (and you can help us do this!)



Acknowledgements

- Funders: NIHR School for Public Health Research
- Supervisors: Dr Ruth McGovern & Professor Eileen Kaner (Newcastle University), Dr Judi Kidger (University of Bristol)
- Public Advisor and Supervisor: Viv Evans OBE (Adfam)
- Young person advisory group and PROPS Young Peoples Service
- Young people and practitioners who took part in the research!

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Thank you for listening!

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