



Think Dads Conference Evaluation October 4th 2023

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1. Overview

Small Steps Big Changes is a £45m transformation programme, -funded by The National Lottery Community Fund's part of the 10 year 'A better start' funding programme to improve the lives of young children.

Accountable to Nottingham CityCare Partnership, a third sector provider of community services in the city, SSBC is a partnership of parents and professionals - including Nottingham City Council, health partners, commissioners, voluntary and community groups, parents and local communities - coming together to help give the best start for Nottingham's babies and children.

The SSBC partnership supports four key outcomes; communication and language, social and emotional development, nutrition, and system change; helping Nottingham's children to grow up happy, healthy, and confident. Father Inclusive practice sits within the system change and is a city-wide priority.

SSBC and partner organisations have been actively working with fathers for over eight years. During this time, there have been many developments including, 'Think Dads' training for the workforce, a consultation with Nottingham fathers, a Dad's Information Pack, a 'Think Dads' campaign, and the development of Father Friendly Service Standards for organisations to improve their approach when working with fathers.

The 'Think Dads' conference was an opportunity to bring all family facing services across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire together to raise awareness of the role of the father and how this has changed in society, the impact of the father figure both on a child and the whole family. The conference also provided an opportunity to think about Father Inclusive Practice and how practitioners could provide a service that is father friendly, where fathers in Nottingham City feel supported in their parenting role.

137 attended the conference covering a wide spectrum of babies, children, and family services including Children's Public Health 0-19 Service, Family Nurse Partnership, Midwifery, Nottingham City Council (NCC) Education Services, NCC Early Help, NCC Social Care, NCC Family Support, Mental Health Practitioners, Family Mentors and Community and Voluntary services.

Key Speakers for the day included Professor Anna Tarrant from the University of Lincoln, Anna is the Director of the 'Following Young Fathers Further' study, and the Centre for Innovation in Fatherhood and Family Research. Anna was able to share her study which looked at the changing lives, experiences, relationships, and support needs of young fathers. Anna also looked at the importance of father inclusion and what do we mean by it and how this translates into practice by providing an environment of support that is compassionate, redemptive, and strength based. Anna also talked about the value of investments in young fathers' participation for them, their children, and their families.

keynote speaker Dr Anna Machin, Doctor of Evolutionary Anthropology, shared her research and the latest findings in genetics, neuroscience, and psychology to tell the story of fatherhood. She talked about the extraordinary physiological changes a man undergoes when he becomes a father, how a man's genes can influence what sort of father he will be and will show how a dad makes a unique contribution to his child's life, helping to foster independence of mind and spirit.

Al Hurrayya, a Nottingham based peer-led support service who provide bespoke, personalised, culturally specific interventions. Shared their knowledge and experience of the specific needs of dads in different cultural settings. This supported those at the conference to have a better understanding of the needs of dads across a culturally diverse city and therefore the opportunity to think about how they better tailor support to all dads in Nottingham.

The campaign launch was presented by the four Nottingham based fathers that were part of the campaign. They bravely took the stage to share their unique stories and perspectives of what it is like being a dad today. Their accounts enabled practitioners to see firsthand the challenges fathers experience and how this has affected their lives.

2. Delegate prior knowledge

Delegates were asked four questions prior to the conference.

1. I have some awareness of Father inclusive Practices.
2. I am confident in using Father Inclusive Practices in my current role.
3. Father Inclusive Practices are used in my current work setting.
4. There are opportunities in my current role for me to share learning.

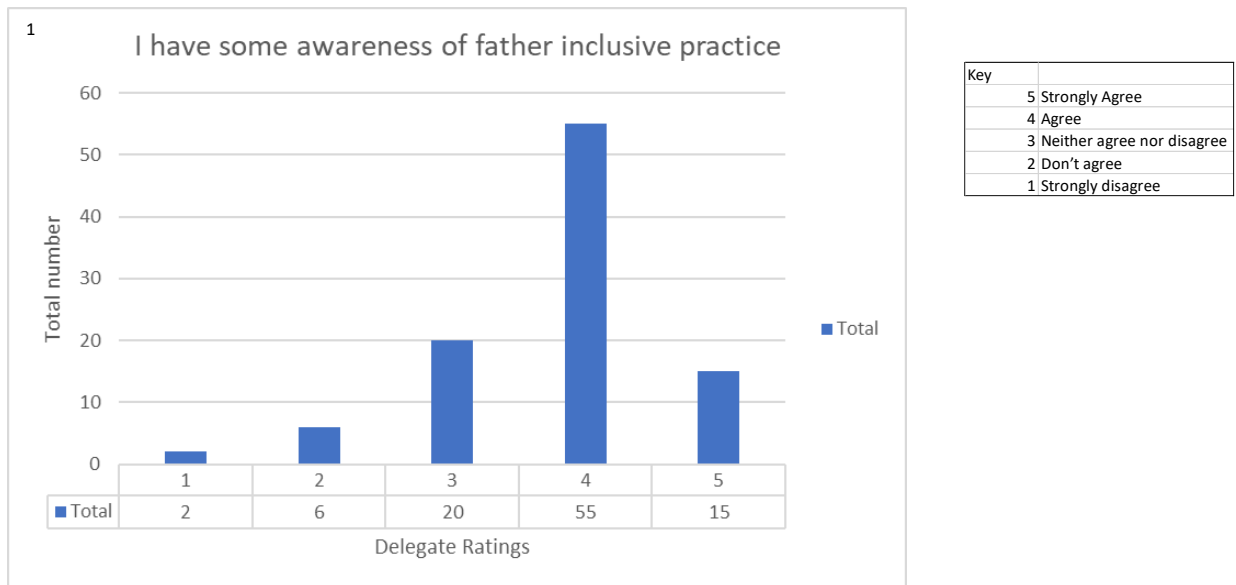
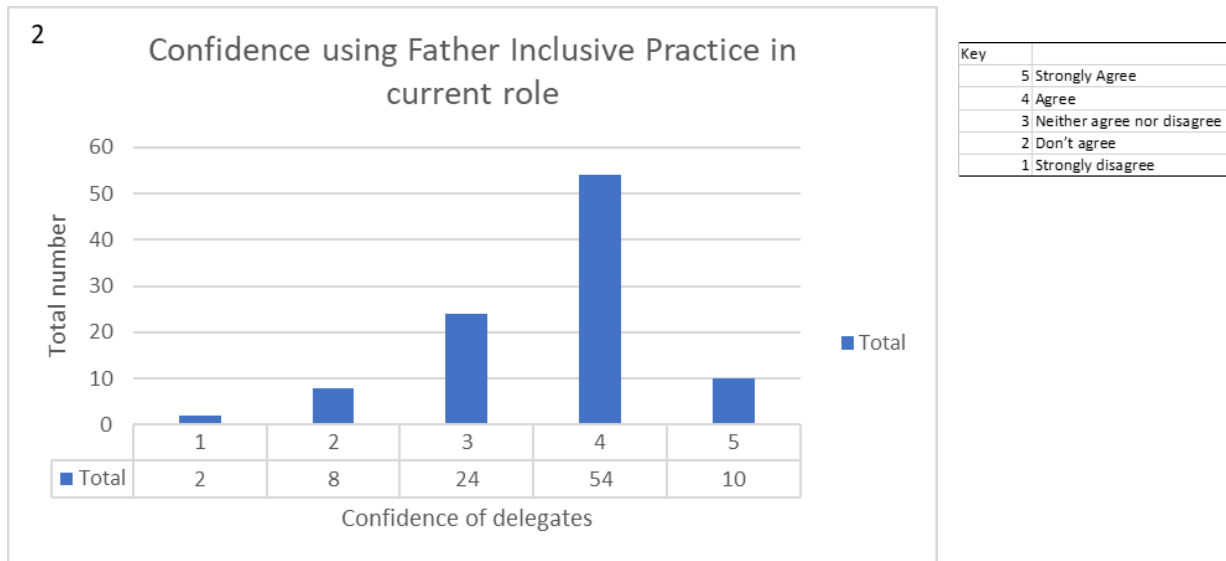


Chart 1 shows a total of 98 delegates provided feedback scoring their current awareness of FIP. Of the 98 delegates, 15% strongly felt they had some awareness of FIP, with 56% agreeing with the statement, 20% were unsure, 7% felt they didn't have an awareness and only 1 feeling they had no knowledge at all. This data shows that a total 71% already had some knowledge of FIP and 28% needed to increase their knowledge and understanding. Of the 98 delegates six reported that they had completed 'Think Dads' training.



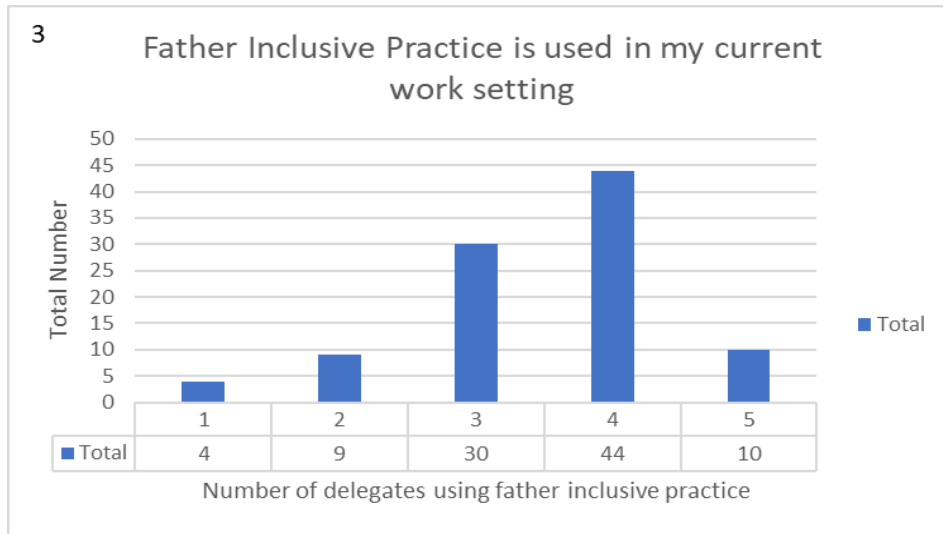
89% of the 98 delegates reported that they did not feel confident to apply FIP into their current role. One of the reasons given for this included that their work role being was primarily focused on the mother. One delegate said:

'There is very little literature of this in my area of practice. As a midwife we generally focus on the woman, however it does need to be a more inclusive practice.'

Another reason cited was the lack of working with dads due to associated identified risks where the fathers' contact had stopped and then there was little subsequent work delivered with dad.

Of those who felt confident to include fathers, three stated that they have previously completed the SSBC 'Think Dads' training and three highlighted that they include fathers in their work. There were two references to the whole family assessment approach using 'Family Stars' which includes dads. The Family Star assessment is an evidence-based tool for both supporting and measuring change.

<https://www.outcomesstar.org.uk/>



| Key | |
|-----|----------------------------|
| 5 | Strongly Agree |
| 4 | Agree |
| 3 | Neither agree nor disagree |
| 2 | Don't agree |
| 1 | Strongly disagree |

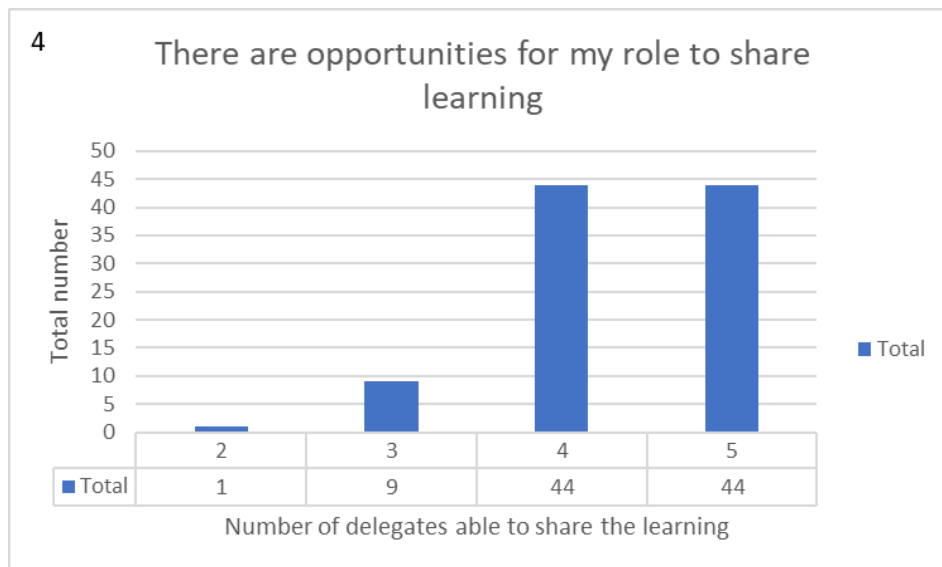
Chart 3 shows that 54 of the 98 delegates agreed Father Inclusive Practices are used in their current work setting, however 43 delegates disagreed.

Below is an example of the feedback provided in the comment section of the survey.

'Aware of fathers being sidelined by professionals but don't feel have confidence in how to approach this.'

'I work for an organisation that provides services to separated parents and their children. I am passionate about the roles of fathers, but see a system designed around mums and children.'

'In children's social care there is not much focus on dads. Would like to know more on how to safely include fathers.'

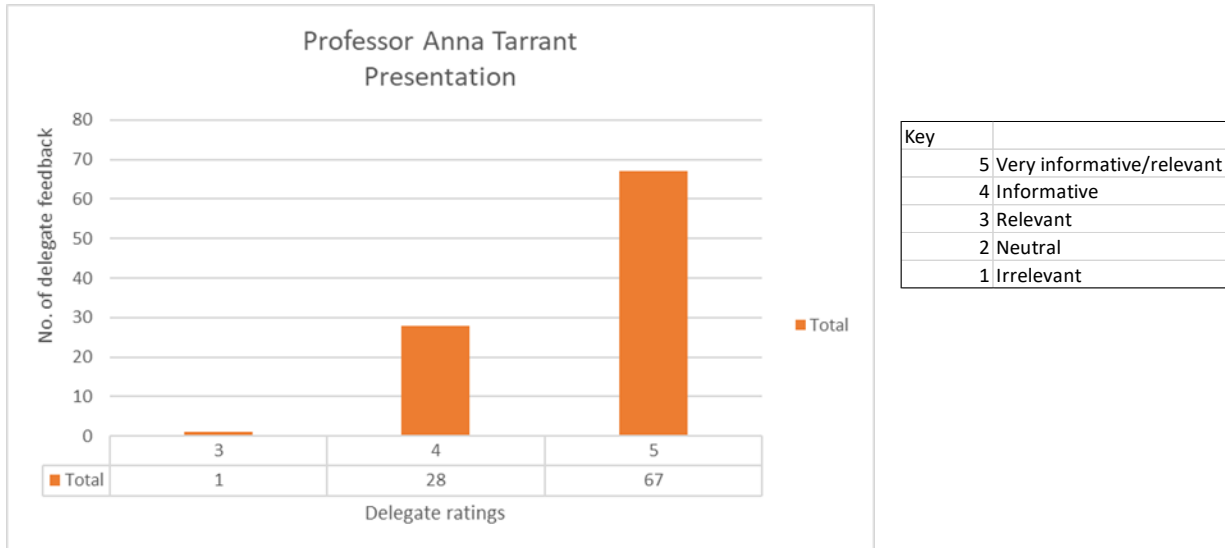


| Key | |
|-----|----------------------------|
| 5 | Strongly Agree |
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A total of 89%, 88 people out of the 98 delegates felt they would be able to share the learning from the conference.

3. Presentation Review

Delegates were asked to feedback against each presentation, scoring between 1 being irrelevant and 5 being very informative. There was also an option to add any comments and feedback.

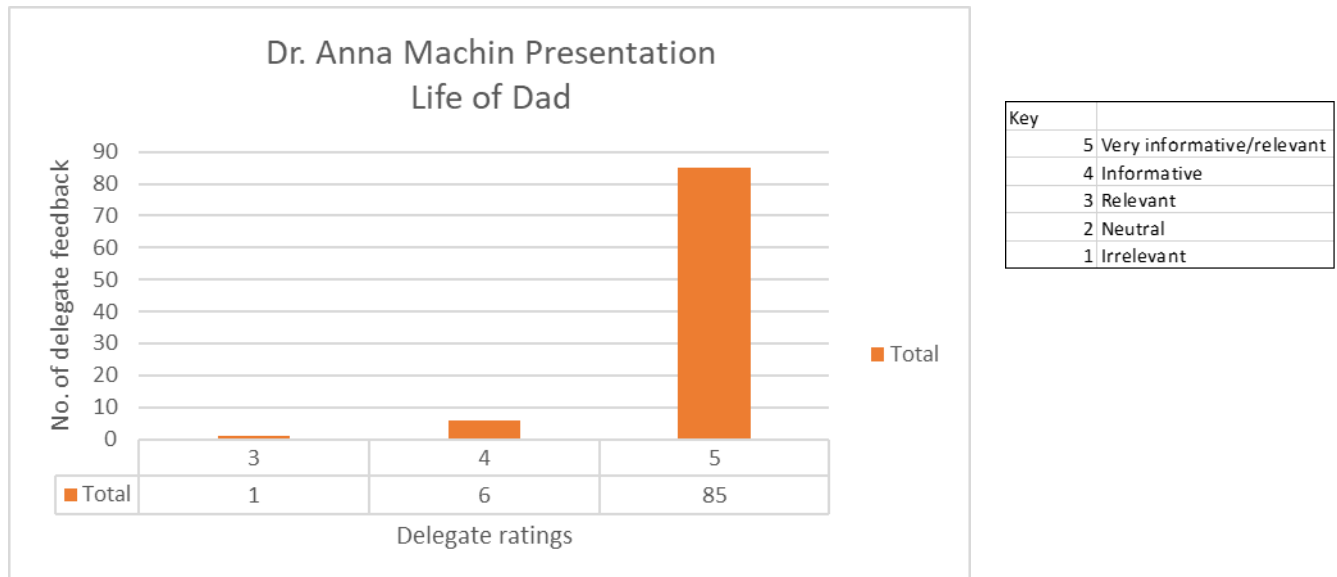


The above chart shows that overall, from the 96 reviews, 96% felt the presentation around young fathers was very relevant and 29% informative. Everyone found the presentation relevant.

Delegate feedback

'All presentations very interesting and informative, especially Anna Tarrant - insight amazing'.

'Helpful research. Anna Tarrant - Informative and practical language'.



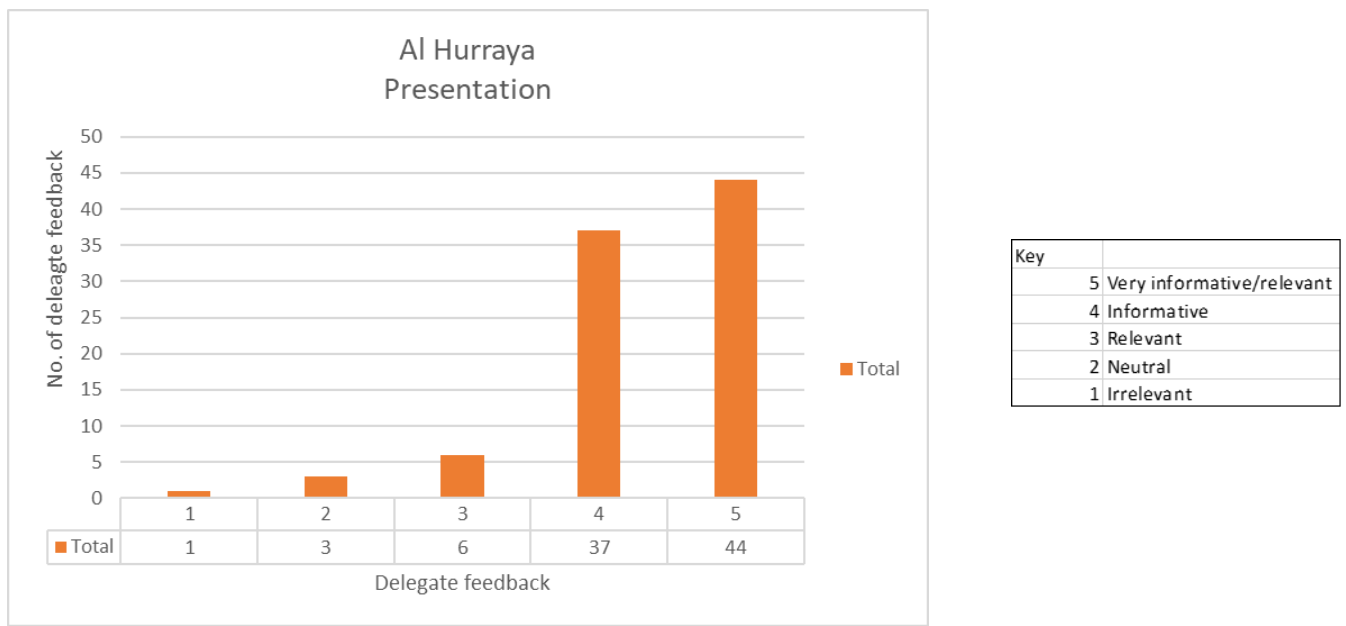
Dr. Anna Machin’s presentation was well received by everyone, with 98% feeling the content was informative/very informative and relevant.

Delegate Feedback

‘Speaker Anna Machin made it easy to listen and take in the knowledge given with good data/stats to take away!’

‘Anna Machin very informative and ‘user friendly’. Brain development examples demonstrated how important dads’ role is to both the child’s development and mother’s wellbeing. Cultural aspects of parenting roles and how these can be developed to be more inclusive of dads.’

‘Anna Machin’s talk was fascinating, and the science is enlightening and powerful. I’ve let today feeling inspired and motivated to do things differently.’



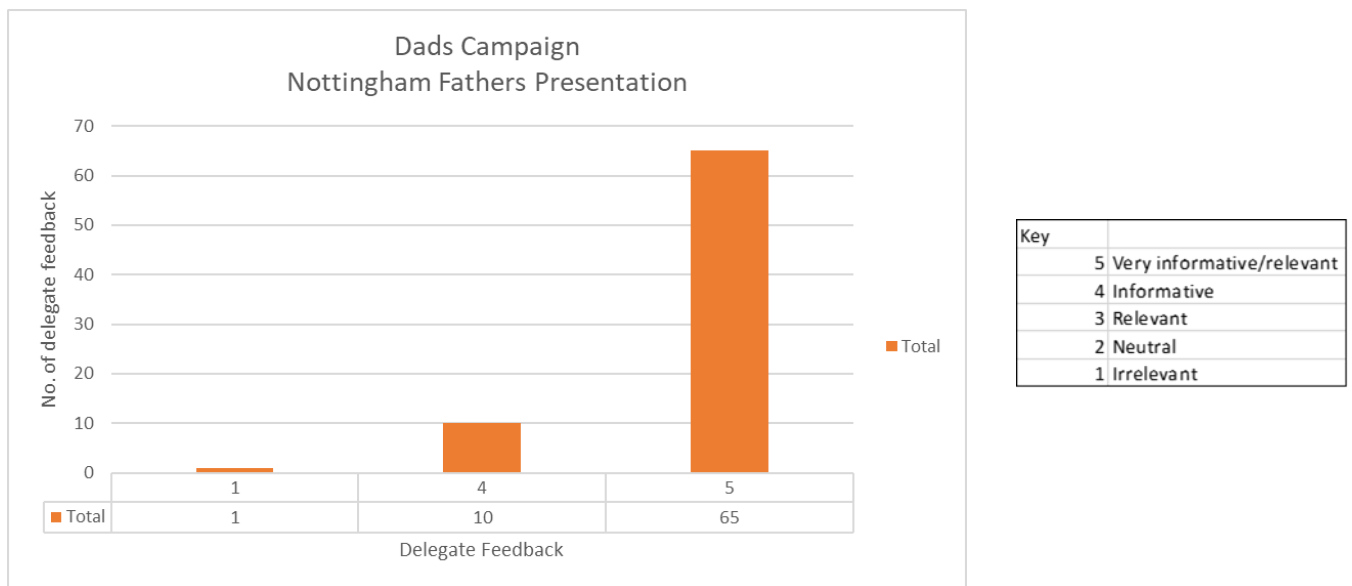
The above chart shows that from a total of 91 responses, 89% felt the session looking at support to fathers from different cultural settings was informative. Six people viewed the presentation as relevant, in the feedback below you will see that the delivery of the presentation was not engaging for some though the topic was reported as being really interesting.

Delegate feedback

'It was good to see that they added cultural aspects to this training.'

'Open and courageous talk. However, we must be mindful that all people from South Asian communities are not labelled or stereotyped in the way that was presented. Each family and community and the family upbringing will greatly vary.'

'Al-Hurraya were interesting as I was able to link it to the community where I work.'



The final presentation provided a personal insight into the parenting journey of four Nottingham fathers. This session was overall well received with a total of 98% feeling it was informative.

Delegate feedback

'Good hearing from dad's experiences and how important 'think dads' is.'

'Very powerful to see the dads and hear about their varied experience of fatherhood.'

'Valuable to hear firsthand accounts, loved more interactive element.'

'I've left today feeling inspired and motivated to do things differently.'

'All very informative and relevant. Today has made me aware in knowledge and what language to use.'

4. Next Steps

The conference provided an opportunity for Nottingham babies, children & family support services to find out about the importance of embedding a father inclusive approach within their organisations.

One delegate commented,

'Very informative and interesting, exciting possibilities of how we can change policy and practice in Nottingham'.

The conference has demonstrated that SSBC and partners need to continue to inform the workforce about:

- The wider benefits of father involvement
- The significant impact that fathers have on the health, development, and well-being of children and on the health behaviours of mothers.
- How they can start their journey to become father inclusive.

Outlined below practical ways colleagues can get involved and become more 'father friendly'.

1. Think Dads Training

There are 7 sessions planned from January through to July 2024 at Trent conference Centre. Booking available via EventBrite: <https://ThinkDadsTraining.eventbrite.co.uk>. These are the last training dates we can offer as we move towards identifying a lead partner to continue this work when the SSBC programme ends in March 25.

Training will take place on the following dates

- January 24th 2024
- February 6th 2024
- March 5th 2024
- April 16th 2024
- May 7th 2024
- June 4th 2024
- July 2nd 2024

2. Think Dads Campaign Toolkit

- Set of 4 digital poster (print copies are available upon request)
- Social media graphics
- Videos (local fathers bravely sharing their journey)
- 'Father Friendly' window stickers
- 'Think Dads' Pin Badges

To order posters and resources, please complete this form <https://forms.office.com/e/ARdqJHnXT7>

3. Father Friendly Service Standards

As part of the campaign, we would like to invite you to become a Father Friendly Organisation. To this end, we have developed an additional toolkit that will support a systemic change towards father inclusivity.

The toolkit includes:

- Maturity Matrix - quality assurance document which outlines what organisations need to have in place to be 'Father Friendly'.
- Organisation Checklist - supports services to self-assess and work towards becoming 'Father Friendly'.
- Service Setting Checklist - supports services to self-assess and work towards becoming 'Father Friendly' in specific settings which fathers will visit i.e. Family Hubs.

If you would like to get involved in the delivery of Father Friendly Service Standards, please email ncp.ss.bc@nhs.net and a member of the team will be in touch to arrange a discussion on how we can best support you.

The 10-year SSBC Community Lottery funded programme will end in March 2025. There are ongoing conversations with senior leaders in Nottingham to both secure strategic support to develop father inclusive practice and to identify a lead partner agency to continue this important work post SSBC.

THINK DADS



Father-Inclusive Strategy

September 2023

What's happened?

Recliner chairs in NUH maternity wards



Think Dads (workforce settings)



'Dads engagement' training / 'Think Dads' training developed (revised 2023)



System evaluation

Feed your way - dad digi campaign



Together we're learning



FRED

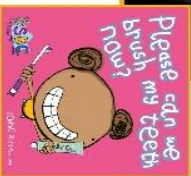
Perinatal Mental health training (IHV)



Zephyrs – woodworking sessions for bereaved dads



Mark Williams hot topic and webinar



Animation series & oral health book launched



Fathers consultation

Formed Father Inclusive Practice group

Dads Pack (and translations)



Family Mentors use dads consent forms and Father Inclusive service checklist

Father Inclusive added to job specs & supplier contracts



Ideas Fund (Father focused)

Think Dads digital campaign



2023-2025

What we learnt

- Resource gaps
- System blockers in policy, practice and IT
- Fragmented approach
- Limiting beliefs about what can and should be done

- Father Friendly Service Standards Toolkit
- Service Standards Matrix & Settings Checklist
- Dads Pack revision and national version
- Embed Think Dads Training
- Think Dads badges supplied to workforce

- Father Friendly Service Stickers
- Comms & promotion pack
- Think Dads: Conference, workshops, Family Hub Integration
- Webinar & Conference planning 2024

Small Steps Big Changes - giving every child the best start in life

