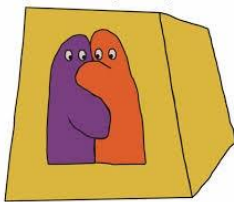


Cymuned Unedig i Bawb yn Y Barri



Community United Barry 4 Everyone



Headlines Analysis on CUBE's Side by Side Provision – January 2024

Background

A series of engagements facilitated by Higher Plain Research and Education Ltd was carried out with the whole community of CUBE, supported by CUBE team members where appropriate to ensure the discussion space felt safe and known to those taking part. The facilitation took place over a two-day period on the 12th and 13th of July, 2023. The agreed idea behind this process was that depending on the themes found within these discussions and narratives CUBE would then develop a project proposal to meet the needs (if any) of these community members.

A report was written for CUBE by Higher Plain Research and Education Ltd providing an overview of the engagement process and an analysis of the themes from the 18 different focus groups and informal interviews over the two days. This analysis provided some clear insights for potential new projects and needs going forward for CUBE and following a discussion with the Chief Executive of CUBE, who had also had discussions with the two directors of CUBE it was suggested that there were three projects / needs that should be developed. One of the suggested projects for commissioning was an in-depth evaluation of the Side-by-Side Family model that CUBE developed and use and this to support understanding of the impact of their restorative approach to practice and how this model could be used more widely, both within the Barry locality and further afield within a Welsh and UK context.

The evaluation of Side-by-Side model

The evaluation of the Side-by-Side provision and model of practice is currently underway and started in September 2023 and will end in March 2024. The methodology of analysis will use both qualitative and quantitative approaches utilising a myriad of mixed methods including; historical data available from CUBE, the CASCADE data set, personal well-being measurements, and a blend of informal interviews, whole family focus groups, and mixed family focus groups. The approach where possible will engage with previous families who have engaged with CUBE and Side by Side and those that are currently engaging and being supported by the project. The evaluation will ensure that within a family context the lived

experiences of children, young people, and both parents will be captured where ever possible. The evaluation will also gain understandings from the CUBE practitioners on their lived experiences of the project within a focus group setting.

Using such a hybridity of methods to try to offer a real and trustworthy understanding of CUBE and their Side-by-Side approach and model and the impact it has on the families and individual family members is no linear task and indeed, as with a lot of real-world research it can be 'messy.' However, as Sakata (2023) emphasises, the need to embrace such 'messiness' in mixed methods research is needed to effectively share the full depth and understandings of real-world research. Indeed, Sanscartier (2020: p53) describes the ability and need for social researchers using mixed methods to develop a comfortableness with such messiness and non-linearity and has coined the approach as utilising a 'craft attitude' where the researcher embraces all of this and views the research as storytelling. The power of supporting a storytelling approach with social work and criminology has long been accepted as a liberating and empowering process where people feel included not researched on (Sandberg & Ugelvik, 2016) and particularly needed when conducting research with vulnerable communities (Gordon, 2020) who deserve and need for their voices to be heard, as they are so often neglected and unheard (Sim & Waterfield, 2019).

The outcome of this research will be an in-depth report of academic standard and will have three main purposes:

- 1) To have the Side-by-Side model of practice and impact on families who engage with it independently evaluated
- 2) To disseminate the findings and model of practice widely across networks and professional / academic organisations / institutions to support the development of knowledge, practice, and skills in restorative family focused practice
- 3) To support the future development of the Side-by-Side model of practice in other localities and support organisational growth of CUBE.

The evaluation and impact report will contain analysis of the Side-by-Side model in relation to the available literature relating to family focused and restorative interventions. The structure and content of the report will contain: Introduction, Executive Summary, Review of Literature, Methodology, Analysis of data and Discussion (in relation to findings and other literature/research), implications for future practice, conclusion, references, appendices (if appropriate).

This project will take 7 months to complete in relation to the final report however, the other outputs which include; two network/conference events, a blog/article publication may take slightly longer dependent on acceptance onto networks and events. The journal article publication will be achieved within 18 months of final report.

Well-Being Capture and Measurement

The well-being measurement tool being employed for this evaluation is the personal well-being measurement approach used by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as it keeps up to date data on the UK population as a whole and for specific regional areas. The ONS measures personal well-being using four measures (often referred to as the ONS4), which capture three types of well-being: evaluative, eudemonic and affective experience. These measures ask people to evaluate how satisfied they are with their life overall, asking whether they feel they have meaning and purpose in their life, and asks about their emotions during a particular period. These measures of personal well-being ask people to assess each of these aspects of their lives and so CUBE would also do this at the intervals stated above (Please see Appendix I for the well-being index capture sheet to use on the project).

Please see below for an overview of the personal well-being measures that the ONS use in their research.

Measure	Question
Life Satisfaction	Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
Worthwhile	Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?
Happiness	Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?
Anxiety	On a scale where 0 is "not at all anxious" and 10 is "completely anxious", overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

Source: Office for National Statistics

Table 2: Personal well-being thresholds

Life satisfaction, worthwhile and happiness scores		Anxiety scores	
Response on an 11 point scale	Label	Response on an 11 point scale	Label
0 to 4	Low	0 to 1	Very low
5 to 6	Medium	2 to 3	Low
7 to 8	High	4 to 5	Medium
9 to 10	Very high	6 to 10	High

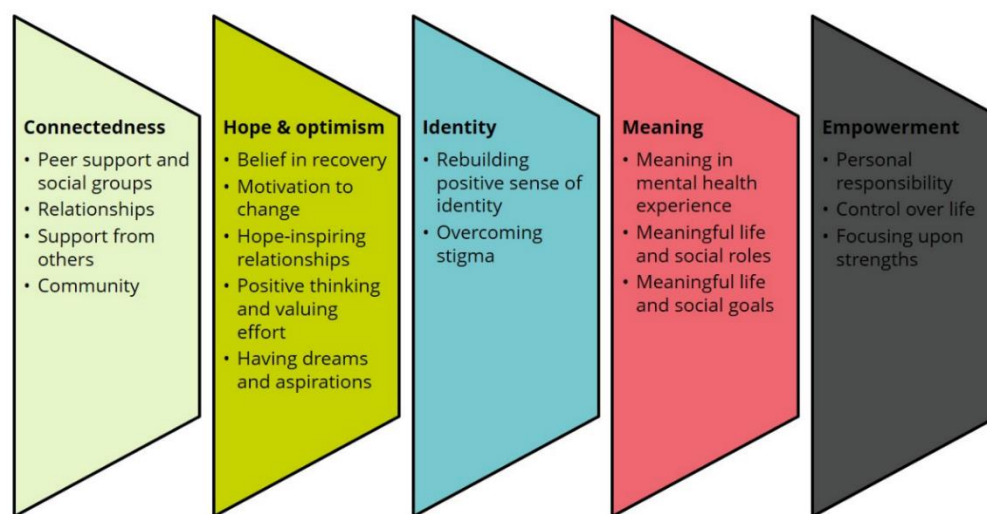
Source: Office for National Statistics

Within the focus groups and informal interviews, the project would also use the CHIME framework as a thematic tool to guide discussion as well as other key themes found within the wider restorative practice literature. The CHIME elements discussed within the focus groups and informal interviews will explore how members experience and feel about the: *Connections* in their life, their *Hope and optimism*, their *Identities*, the *Meaning* they have in

social roles and mental health, and also their experiences of choice, control, and *Empowerment* (Please see below image of the CHIME framework).

This mixed approach will support an understanding of the well-being of the families in relation to the wider UK and regional population and support the families to engage with, discuss, and be heard about how they feel and experience their well-being. In this way the focus groups and informal interviews also act as a reflective tool hopefully illustrating personal and community growth due to engagement with the project; and this support the projects overall values and aims of increasing self-agency.

The CHIME framework for personal recovery



Leamy et al. 2011

Initial Headlines Analysis

The analysis of the available data at this point of the project will start with some 'setting the scene' understandings relating to referral source and reasons for referral and initial engagement with CUBE. For the purposes of this initial headlines report the CHIME framework will be used as the main thematic points of interest and discussion, utilising data from across all of the mixed methods. Following this an overview of other useful findings will be shared. Please note, as highlighted above, that the full report will present findings across the mixed methods (in greater detail than this short headlines report) and then relate and discuss these in relation to the literature including the Welsh and UK Policy context.

Referral to CUBE and needs of families

Interestingly, referrals to CUBE mostly came through self-referral (65%) and only 35% from Social Services. This is quite unusual when comparing to other services and suggests that a high proportion of the 65% who self-referred were unknown to social services and or were not happy with the support they were receiving. The reality of other services in the Barry locality not being good quality or meeting the needs of families that have engaged with Side-by-Side is clearly captured in the focus groups and informal interviews and this will be expanded upon on in the final evaluation report. However, it is important to note here that most people spoken to felt that social services and other support services treated people in negative ways with a lack of respect and talked 'down to people' rather than working with people and supporting them in making decisions. The initial analysis also suggests that such other services in Barry area do not offer a consistent and safe service largely due to the feeling that the relationships developed are not trusted and people always felt let down by the services provided and those who were meant to be supporting them through their development and needs.

Those that have engaged with CUBE and the Side-by-Side project also have clear needs and challenges in their lives. Indeed, it was common across the families spoken to that although there were many different narratives and stories to be told, what was common to all peoples lived experiences were that they had a complex range of support needs.

The most common experience across the families or parents spoken to (Women in this case although obviously this could have been men also) was the experience of domestic violence. Domestic violence had caused for many significant trauma and the effects of dealing with ongoing and or past domestic violence was common causing challenges with mental health, particularly anxiety and depression. There were also those that had experienced domestic violence and or abuse in childhood who also used substances to 'block out the pain' or 'numb it all and try to forget' and so there were support needs for recovery from substance use.

Another common experience was how parents and the whole family dealt with communication in an angry, reactive, and emotion-led way which often resulted in conflict, shouting, ongoing feelings of anger and verbal abuse, resulting in destructive communication and unhealthy relationships between partners and or their children. This in turn often meant that children within education environments were 'disruptive' in school and typical home and family behaviour was re-modelled in school and was often therefore reactive, angry, and even violent.

The combined experiences of witnessing or experiencing domestic violence, angry and emotional communication, and the use of substances meant that children within families who engaged with CUBE also experienced trauma, had mental health challenges including self-harm, anxiety, and depression. It was also the case that some of the children and young people spoken to or who had been discussed with parents had other neurodivergent conditions, such as ADHD. Neurodivergent behaviours presented other challenges for both positive parenting and for the child experiencing it in relation to education, social networks, and within the family environment.

Although, not a main focus of conversation for the people who have engaged in discussion during this initial evaluation phase it was also clear that many of the adults within the families supported have struggled for employment and or in education and training. This also often meant that families were living with low economic resources and even living 'in poverty.'

Some of the people spoken to were at the end of or nearing the end of their support with CUBE and these people spoke how they now had greater self-worth, confidence, and aspirations of a positive future and a healthy family life, which also included work, education, or training. All of the people who were at this stage of their journey stated they would not be where they were today if it were not for the support they have received from CUBE. One woman captures the impact CUBE has had on her after talking about her journey and being ready for life quite visually when she stated 'I would be in the gutter still if it wasn't for CUBE and Lisa.'

As can be seen, there are significant and layered complexities relating to and resulting from the past and present experiences of the families who engage with CUBE's Side-by-Side restorative practice. These experiences create significant challenges and a range of needs in effectively supporting a reality where there is personal and family growth towards positive well-being and self-agency. However, despite this complexity and significant trauma that many have experienced, CUBE's Side-by-Side model of practice and the expertise of the practitioner team have, as can be seen powerfully below, created a restorative practice that works with families and empowers them to make positive changes in their and their families lives.

Well-Being and Recovery using the CHIME Framework

Feeling Connected

It was clear that the approach provided by Side-by-Side supported the development of greater connection to own family members, the wider CUBE community, and the local Barry community. Indeed, CUBE manages to create authentic relationships based on mutual trust and respect and all of the people who engaged spoke of how they feel this and therefore the CUBE community is a safe and secure space where there is a real solidarity amongst those that engage. A few quotes from the informal interviews and focus groups illustrate this powerfully.

"I feel more connected to my two kids. We can talk more and we are definitely closer. I can see he opening up and he is actually talking to us now. We can chat, have a cuppa, and engage." Father

"I can actually see myself having a social life now, I'm not ready just yet but I want one. I never thought I'd feel that, want that for me." Father

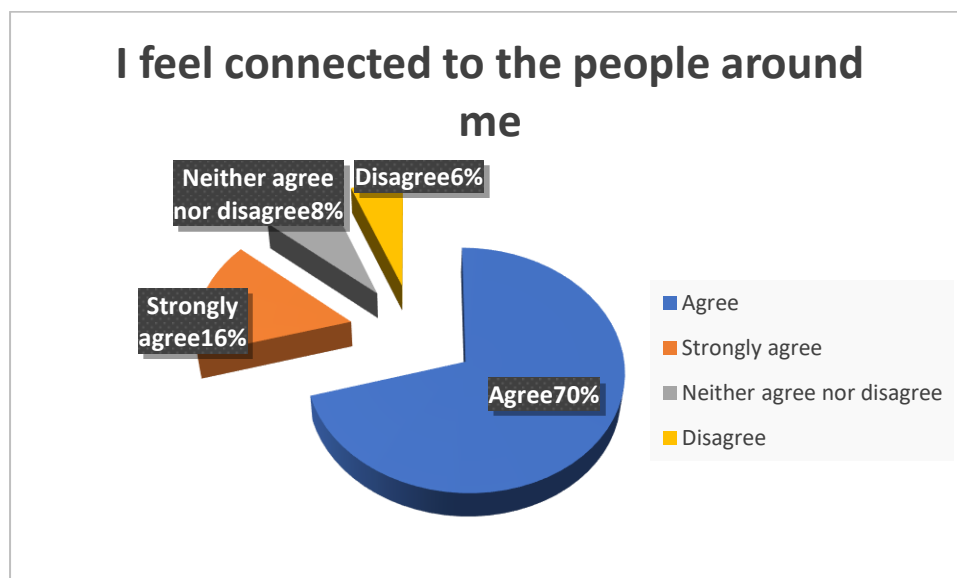
"We are starting to do the social thing a bit with CUBE over the summer. We want a social life too now and even as a couple we do more things and activities together. Sounds silly but I can talk to people in the shops and just have a chat, you know, I feel ok about it all."

Mother and Father

"Everyone's so nice here, very welcoming, you just feel right at home and safe, I'm part of CUBE and we are all in this together. They've got our back and our interests at heart and so yeah, I feel part of a community here." Mother

"My kids have changed so much, it's amazing, and yeah at school they are flying, they have friends and are really engaging with it all. I thought that might never happen." Mother

The CASCADE data also showed that 86% of people felt connected to the people around them following engagement with CUBE as captured below.



Hope and Optimism

Through engagement with the practitioners at CUBE and through the provision, such as the parenting programmes and the one-to-one support everyone who discussed their experiences had increased their hope in life and optimism for the present and the future and could identify this within their partner and or children.

"I can reflect on me now, and discuss my past, present, and future, and I am learning to control and understand my emotions and triggers. So yeah, I have hope now, I can see I'm changing and better able to deal with situations that before, well, you wouldn't want to see me before." Mother

"I can be vulnerable and honest and I'm not judged and so I can really open up and understand myself and it makes me feel different, like I'm getting somewhere. I've some way to go but I think I can get there." Father

"I can see her, I'm almost back to me. If I didn't have CUBE I'd be on a very different journey. I was afraid to be a parent and take on the role, now, well now I can take on the world."

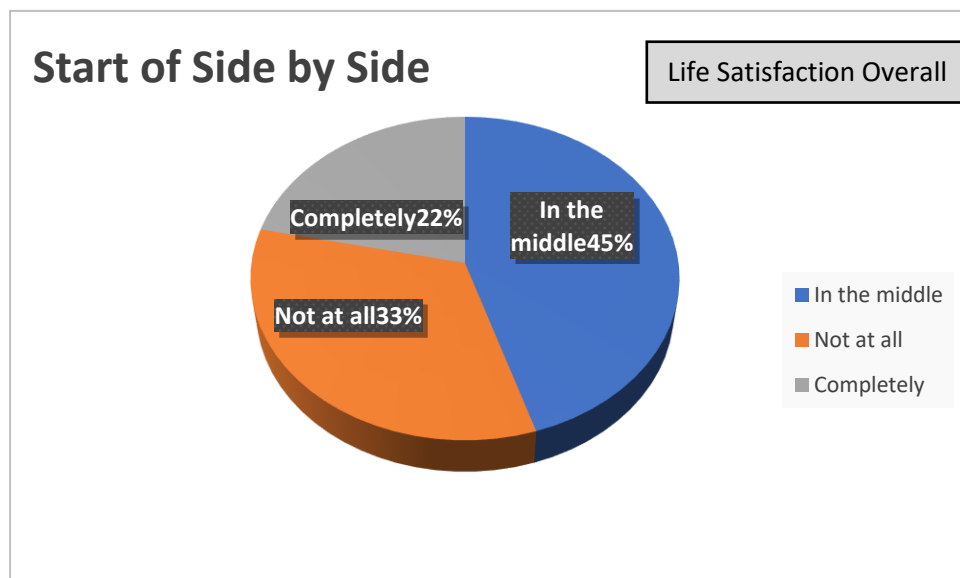
Mother

"I look forward to getting up, being a mum, having time for me, I've got the tools now and life is enjoyable again." Mother

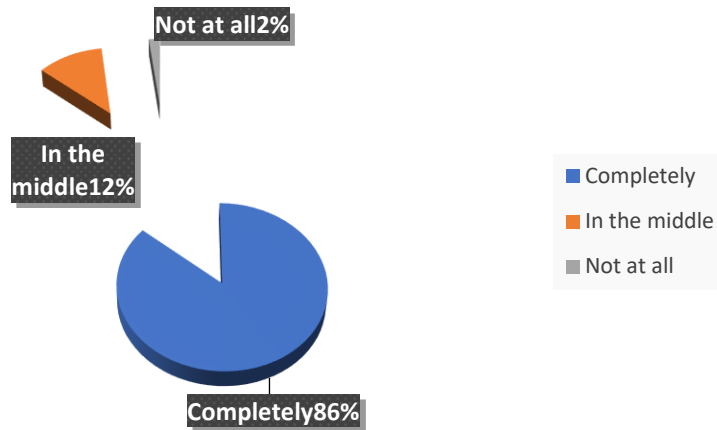
"I love Charlotte. She treats me good and it's fun. I can speak to her. I look forward to seeing her. I can see I'm changing with stuff. I tidy up after myself and my room is tidier, to help mum" Child

"Erm, mmm, I want to live now, I want to get out of bed." Father

It can also be seen that life satisfaction has dramatically increased for the 20 families that have so far shared their experiences since engaging with the project with 78% of families not completely happy with their lives at the start of the project with this developing into a self-assessment of 86% feeling completely happy with their life satisfaction.

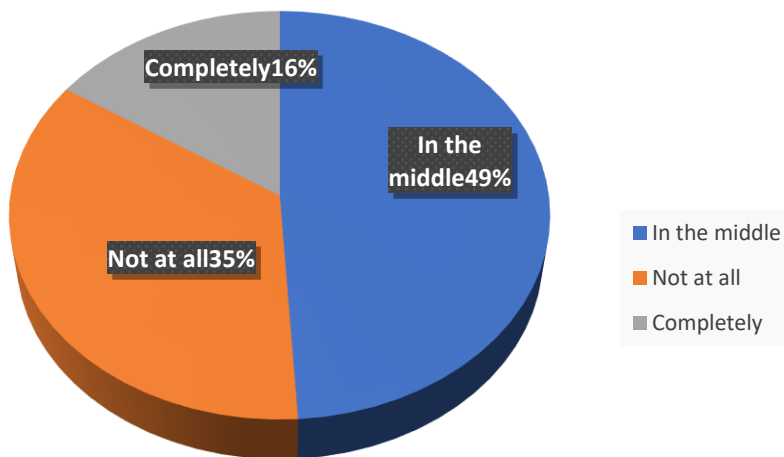


End of Side by Side

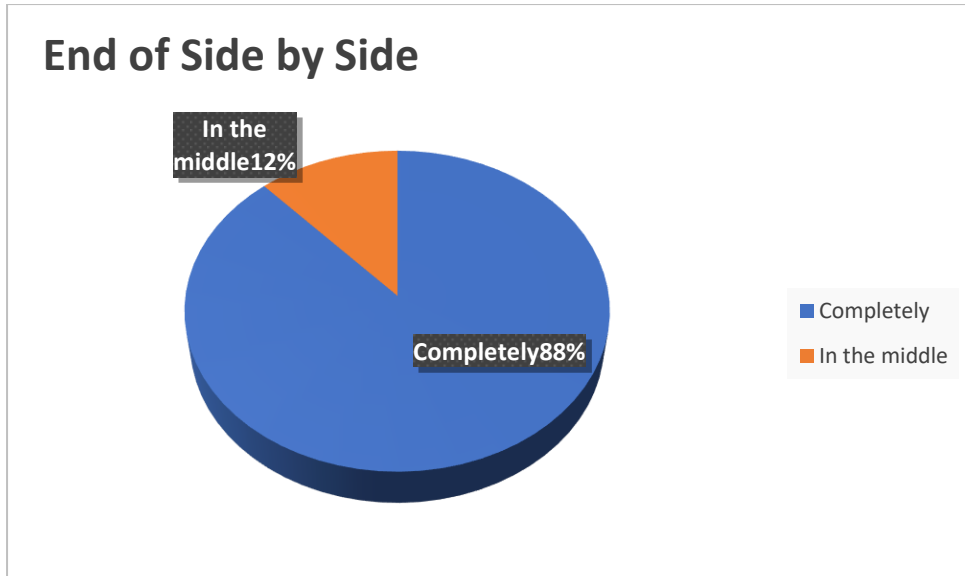


It can also be seen below how families evaluation of their happiness increased following support from the project with only 16% being completely happy at the start of the project to 88% by the end of the project.

Start of Side by Side



How happy did you feel yesterday?



Rebuilding of Positive Identities

It was also powerfully clear that people engaged with CUBE at the start of their journey felt at best fairly negative but commonly significantly negative about themselves and their identities and roles. Through their support with the Side-by-Side model of practice all people highlighted how much they had changed and had much higher levels of self-esteem and reconnecting with and or reinventing their parental, partner, individual, and child identities.

"I understand that I'm not a bad person now, I just lost my way, and all the bad stuff that's happened to me, that I'm still dealing with, meant I made some bad choices. But these don't define me and I can change, and I am changing. I am a good person and a good dad."

Father

"I have faith in my abilities and I believe in the CUBE process and I can see I'm being positive, I'm learning, and trying to make things right. I'm being a better dad, and partner." Father

"I couldn't grow as a parent or as myself until I understood myself, my past, and I reflect now, Be the bird, I listen and watch more and I'm less reactive. I'm a stronger person and mum and I can see my daughter watching and learning off me, she says I'm her rock." Mother

"I'm a mum, ha, and a much better one now too because of Lisa and her support, but I'm so much more than that too. I like myself and I know my worth."

Meaning to self, social, mental health & Well-Being

The work restorative approach CUBE uses also had significant impact on all of the families in relation to how they experienced and gained greater insight into themselves, their social contexts, and in particular their own mental health and well-being. The full report will explore and illustrate this in greater depth but the impact on those spoken too was hugely evident.

"I feel calmer. I can talk to my sons. I can feel my emotions and I'm aware of them so I can slow myself down and not react and I can manage them more." Father

"I'm not so self-deprecating and I don't beat myself up as much. I'm only human and I just need to keep being proactive and working on me and supporting my partner and my sons." Father

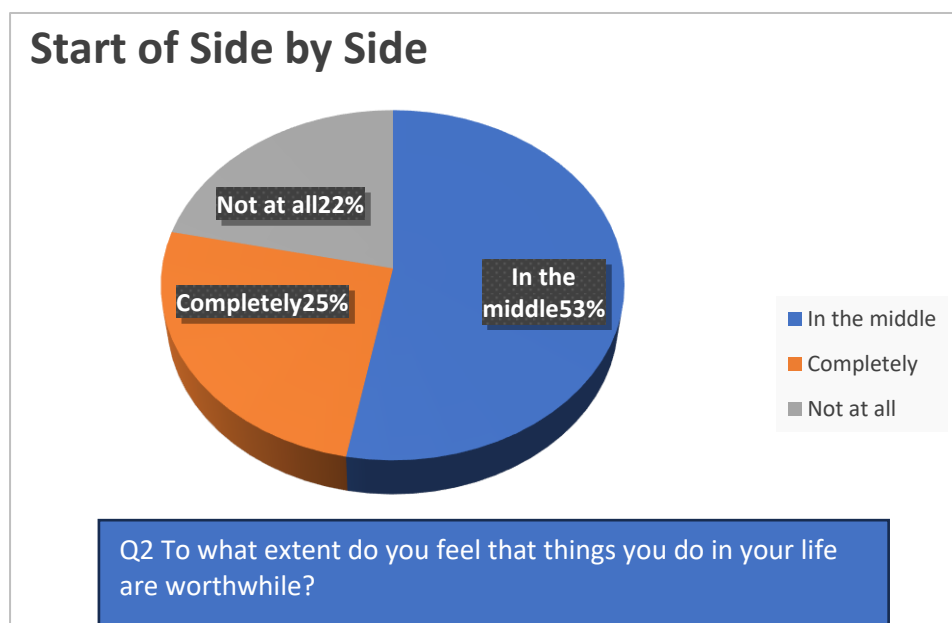
"I'm developing myself. I've new skills and I'm less defensive and I listen more. I'm able to be calmer and be in the right mode for parenting. I shout a lot less." Mother

"I'm less anxious and down. I didn't want to live really. I do now. I want it all. I enjoy life again." Mother

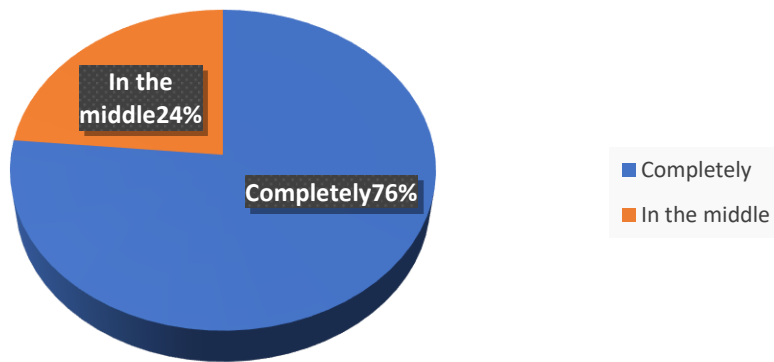
"I am still quite neurotic and anxious and I catastrophise situations quite a lot but I'm more aware of it and I'm working on it. Charlotte helps me to see all of this and gives me the tools to challenge myself and my thinking. I'm working on more logical thinking and breathe work and I also do yoga. The parenting skills work is also so important and I know and can see I'm being a better mum to my son and more in parent mode not adult mode with him." Mother

"I had no support and not getting the help I needed. The other services are just crap none of them are like CUBE. I had no self-worth I didn't respect myself and I was not protecting my child. It all changed with CUBE they were direct and honest and respected me and true to their word. They listened and I was heard. Through that I learnt to live again, to like myself and believe in me and develop my skills as a parent. I believe in myself now and my mental health, my well-being is all great." Mother

Across the 20 families that answered the well-being measurement it also clear to see the growth in purpose and meaning in families lives with an increase from 25% of families feeling things in their lives are worthwhile to 76% by the end of engagement with the project.

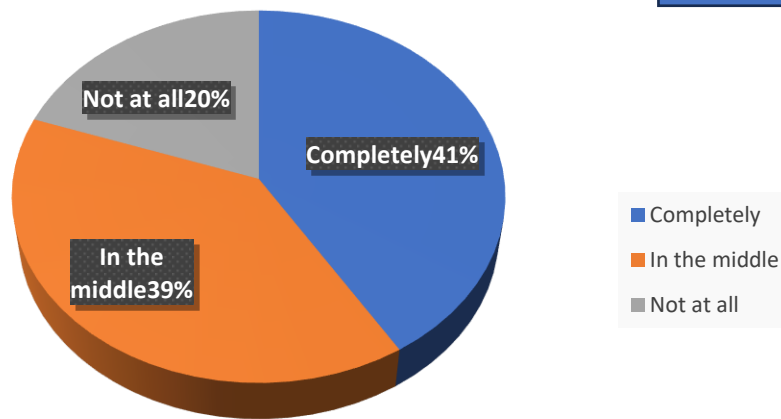


End of Side by Side

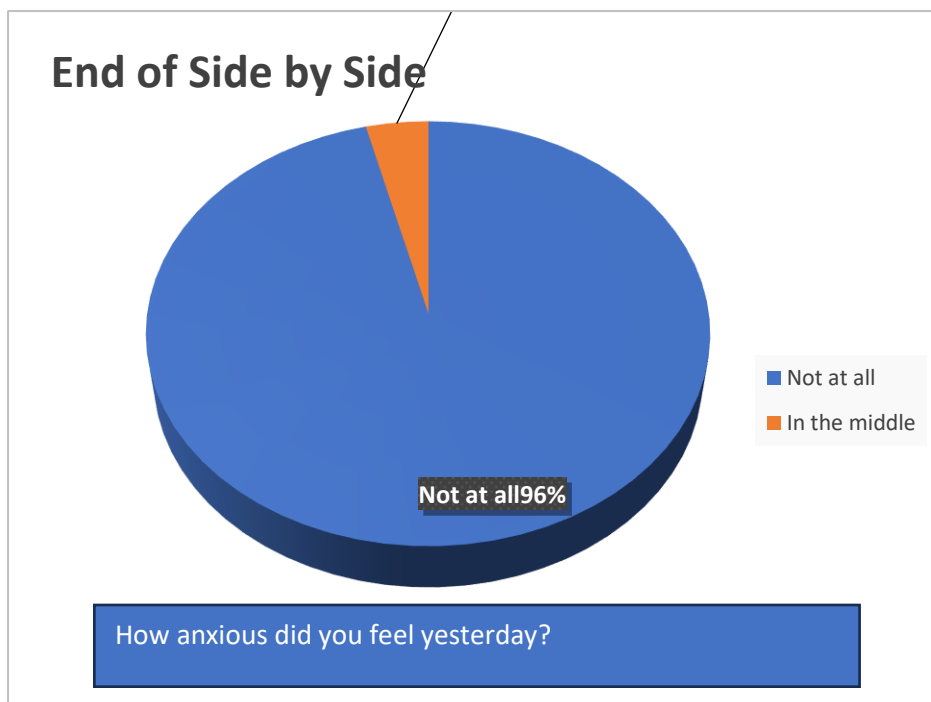


It was also the case that anxiety experiences decreased following engagement with Side-by-Side as can be seen below, with 80% of families feeling some level of anxiety at the start of the project but only 4% feeling a little anxiety at the end of the project and therefore 96% feeling no anxiety at all.

Start of Side by Side



How anxious did you feel yesterday?



Feeling Choice, Control, & Empowerment

Although the CHIME framework is not a stage model it can feel logical that it is in a way because as people become more socially connected, increase their hope and optimism, develop more positive identities, and gain greater and deeper meaning of self and mental health and well-being it stands to reason they are better able to make informed choices, feel more in control of their decisions making and gain empowerment. It is certainly the case that the members spoken to over the first round of informal interviews and focus groups explained how they do indeed feel greater choice and control over their lives and were now better able to make decisions confidently and knowing they were the right ones for themselves and their family.

“Lisa is like my spirit guide and she has helped be more in control and I am supported to explore and decide on my journey and we jointly agree a life plan and on my behaviour development.” Father

“I face challenges now and I’m honest with myself.” Father

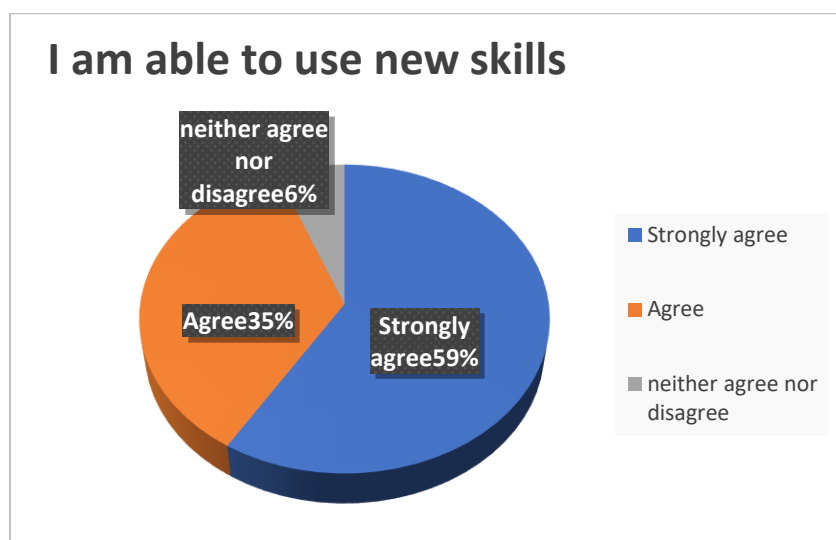
“I can be more honest with myself and choose to do what I need to so I am challenging my anger and angry behaviours.” Father

“My son was a very angry and destructive teenager and now he is starting to soften and I even get the odd ‘I love you.’ We don’t argue like we used to and we are both calmer and we talk and when we can’t talk we give each other space and we don’t react. I’m in parent mode more, I’m calmer, I listen, my skills are better and I am a better parent because of it. That’s all down to CUBE.” Father

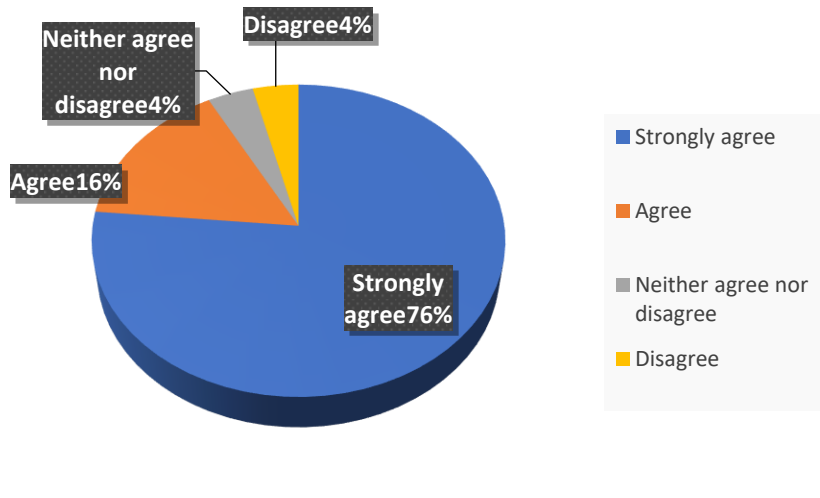
"I wanted to be dead before. Yeah me too. We both did. Now I can go to the shops on my own. I enjoy social stuff. I know we'll get our kids back. We are making the best of me and I am working on myself. I know I'll be a good dad and you'll be a good mum. I can't wait. We've got choices now and options. I used to be closed off, anxious, angry and an emotional wreck and I'm not anymore. I can't live in the past anymore so we don't we are looking to getting the kids back and you know just being a normal family." Mother and Father

"I'm more on control of me and my skills for parenting are so much better. The kids are happier. I'm happier. The kids don't worry about me anymore and I can see it, they are starting to be just kids." Mother

The CASCADE data also showed that all of the families who completed a CASCADE evaluation identified that they had learnt a new skill and almost all had been able to use new skills to support their own and their families development, as shown below.



My family has used this new skill



Further useful learning

As stated earlier within this report the full report will offer deeper analysis but other key findings from the CASCADE data was that:

The length of support for accessing Side-by-Side was varied with 55% needing up to 6 months support, 25% from 6 to 12 months, and 20% of families needing over 12 months support.

100% of families feel safe with CUBE support and staff and 90% feel they know where to go if they don't feel safe in their everyday lives.

CUBE has supported families in developing new skills and coping mechanism in mindfulness, taking time away, talking to friends, family, partners, going for a walk, taking a breath, reflecting, a relaxing including the uptake of hobbies and leisure activities.

88% of people who engaged with CUBE now feel confident in themselves and 94% in their behaviours and actions with other people.

93% of those who answered also felt they were confident in their family members and close friends.

94% also felt confident in asking for help and what they needed.

100% of people who engaged felt that CUBE cares about people in the community and works with people rather than telling them what to do. Therefore 100% of people who used Side-by-Side felt that CUBE listened to them and that their opinion mattered within the professional relationship.

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