

# HENRY Healthy Families

Delivered by **HENRY** from **January 2016 – September 2024**

**HENRY guides groups of parents and carers towards healthier habits for the whole family in a supportive and non-judgmental way, focusing on nutrition, eating behaviours and exercise.**

It also provides free training and resources to the workforce and volunteers, enabling them to deliver HENRY parenting programmes and related support in their own settings.

## How it was delivered

### Programmes available to parents:

- An 8-week group programme: HENRY: Healthy Families Right from the Start - available to all parents.
- A 1-1 service for parents/carers who are unable to attend the group programme (for example because of factors such as disability, language, or lack of confidence).
- Healthy families workshops - available to all parents/carers, including Starting Solids, Fussy Eating and Let's Get Active, of which Starting Solids was made available on a rolling programme every 3-4 weeks in response to demand.

### Training available to workforce and volunteers:

- Core Training for health and early years professionals and VCS organisations.
- Group Facilitator Training for staff who wish to deliver the group intervention HENRY: Healthy Families Right from the Start.
- 1-1 Programme Training.
- Healthy Start in Childcare Training for all childcare settings and childminders (complementing existing food policy and menu planning training).
- Raise, Engage, Refer Training to support the Bradford district workforce and volunteers.

**1086**

**FAMILIES**  
benefitted from the Healthy Families group and 1-1 programme



**98%**  
of referrals enrolled onto the group programme

**73%**

of participants completed the group programme



**77%**

of 1-1 participants completed the programme



**345**

practitioners were trained in Core Skills, Healthy Start in Childcare or as Group Facilitators

## Why this project was developed

Increasing numbers of children are living with overweight and obesity and these are large and growing public health issues.

In the UK, 9.2% of children are already living with overweight or obesity by the time they enter their reception year of primary school, and this figure rises to 22.7% of children leaving primary school after Year 6. (NCMP National Child Measurement Programme).

A programme which establishes healthy habits around food and exercise in the early years is key, since we know that children who are overweight in the early years are more likely to become obese or overweight adolescents and adults.

## The project set out to:

- Support parents/carers of young children to improve their healthy eating habits and nutrition; anticipating that those who completed HENRY programmes would demonstrate improvements in effective parenting, increased consumption of fruit and vegetables, reduced consumption of high fat/sugar foods and improvements in healthy family eating behaviours (e.g. eating together, not snacking, not eating in front of the TV).
- Contribute in the longer term to reductions in the number of overweight/obese children in the Better Start Bradford area at age 2, 5 and 11, as evidenced by the BIBBS cohort evaluation.

## Impact and findings\*

- 98% of enrollees went on to participate, which is a very high conversion rate. This suggests that the project worked hard to engage every family and that participants valued the project.
- The data is consistent and suggests an effectiveness evaluation to consider whether BIBBS children whose parent attended HENRY had significantly lower body mass index at age 2 or 5 compared to others not attending. This evaluation will be available in 2028.
- Having a choice of how to access the Healthy Families Programme has worked well for families and enabled those with barriers to groups or daytime sessions to have a 1-1, an evening or online programme.
- Facilitators who speak a variety of community languages have benefitted families and enabled the programme to be delivered in Urdu with translated resources.
- Parents attending one offer were informed about another to encourage follow on and learning.
- WhatsApp groups for individual programmes have added value to parents/carers' experience, built relationship and support for each other.
- The varied training offer has enabled much of the Bradford early years workforce to be trained in core messaging, or to deliver the programme. Regular practice development sessions for all staff have ensured fidelity to the programme.
- 7 primary schools have partnered to deliver Healthy Families which has helped to embed the HENRY approach.
- Parent Champions have helped recruit families at events and supported individual parents/carers to attend and/or complete paperwork.
- Evaluation suggests that continued support for childcare settings could be beneficial for health in children's wider environments.
- A Start for Life contract for Preparation for Parenthood has enabled the project to have an element of district-wide delivery until March 2025.

\*This section includes information from both the evaluation report/s and project

