

Parents Made all the Difference!

The DEAL* study focussed on finding out the best ways that schools can spot early signs of children's emotional health difficulties

** Developing Early identification and Access in Learning Environments study - looking at the theoretical and practical development of a prototype school based Mental Health Screening Programme to be delivered in primary schools.*

Recruiting the Parents

- Study team & HealthWatch worked together to promote opportunity to join groups
- Members were parents of children attending primary schools in Norfolk & Cambridgeshire
- Parents were selected based on experience
- Two parent advisory groups were recruited, from a diverse range of backgrounds

How they made a difference

- Improved accessibility of documents
- Improved layout and language of questionnaires
- Increased response rates to the study
- Helped to contact 'hard to reach' parents
- Developed inclusive interview questions
- Contributed to promotional materials
- Contributed to the analysis of data



Take home lessons

- Set up a formal recruitment and selection process to help manage applications
- Know General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) rules from the start
- Develop Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) between collaborators
- Feedback is vital to keep participants engaged and valued
- Facilitating Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) groups requires training
- Support for everyone involved is essential