

Hampshire County Council Case Study



Background

Having been introduced to virtual reality (VR) technology through one of Cornerstone VR's online webinars, Hampshire Children's Services and Isle of Wight Council (IOW) Children's Services made the decision to implement a project to trial the use of virtual reality across a number of teams within their Children and Families branch.

To date, 174 staff members across a range of teams, including fostering, youth offending teams (YOT), early help, children in care, children's assessment and safeguarding teams and workforce development, have been trained to use the VR headsets and films.



The Mission

Keen to see how using this technology could enhance their work with families, Hampshire County Council aimed to use the VR in supporting both staff and foster carers' learning and development in related areas, such as domestic abuse, child exploitation and trauma.



Enhancing an individual's understanding of the impact on a child's development and outcomes of parental behaviours.



Increasing learning and understanding of the impact of trauma and its long-term effects.



Supporting recruitment and retention of foster carers.



Increasing placement stability.





I am excited to use the headsets within our skills to foster training courses and in direct work with our foster carers. This could be at times when carers are struggling with children in placement with them and experiencing empathy fatigue. I will also explore how they can also be used in supporting carers on the topic of safer care and when drawing up their own safer caring plans for children placed with them.

Hampshire County Council

Certification Course Attendee



The Solution

As a result of experiencing Cornerstone VR, practitioners and staff from Hampshire County Council agreed that the training:



Raises awareness and understanding around childhood trauma and safeguarding.



Provides deeper insight into early childhood experiences.



That VR is an effective tool to increase practitioners empathy.



Has equipped them with effective skills and knowledge to take forward in their own practice.



The Outcome

One of the main benefits of using Cornerstone VR across the service has been seen in how this tool engages people, as it brings a different perspective and increases users understanding of safeguarding and the impact of parental behaviour on their child's outcomes and wellbeing.

Feedback from foster carers has highlighted that VR has enabled them to have a greater understanding of what is behind the child's behaviour, specifically around their past trauma.

Another key area where Cornerstone VR has been successful for the council has been within workforce development and its in-house graduate trainee programme. Introducing the 2D and 3D films into learning and development has been well received, with feedback from these sessions being overwhelmingly positive, allowing graduates to experience a completely different perspective that they will be able to take forward in their own practice.



The Deputy Director used VR with a small group of experienced elected members and their response was that VR is both **powerful** and **persuasive**; VR is an impressive learning tool to genuinely understand the experiences of young children.



What's next?

Looking ahead to the future, Hampshire County Council are reviewing their first use of Cornerstone VR and are hoping to see the VR becoming more integrated within many aspects of their services.

In the meantime, the Council are continuing discussions with other professionals to be able to share the VR headsets with those in the family network.





About Cornerstone VR



Cornerstone VR is a multi-award-winning, trauma-informed virtual reality programme used by professionals and caregivers who work with vulnerable children and their families.

Our 360-degree immersive films allow users to 'walk in the shoes' of children, bringing the challenges of trauma, neglect, and societal pressures to life.

Spanning critical stages of child development from pre-birth to adolescence, this approach helps professionals, educators and caregivers have a deeper understanding of the child's perspective - building empathy, improving decision-making, and raising the standard of care.

Our programme is used across almost 50% of local authorities, as well as independent fostering and adoption agencies, children's residential homes, schools, virtual schools, universities, NHS trusts, ambulance services, the police and other providers.

Our VR experiences cover key topics across our sectors, including:

- Abuse, Neglect & Trauma
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness
- The Digital World - Social Media and Digital Platforms
- Youth Violence and Knife crime



Contact us

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