

Mental Health Charter

Case study

February 2016

- 1. Project name:** The People's Family Project
- 2. Organisation name:** Edge Hill University/Everton in the Community
- 3. Target group:** Families with children living in the Everton area of Liverpool (L3, L4 and L5 postcodes)
- 4. Aims of project:**

The People's Family Project (PFP) was set up in February 2014 as a joint venture between Edge Hill University and Everton in the Community. The PFP provides families from an area of high socio-economic deprivation with opportunities to enhance their understanding of health and make positive health changes by engaging in a range of sessions including: gym sessions, walking/bike riding, yoga, family fun, health education workshops and cook and taste sessions. To maximise engagement, families are encouraged to attend sessions which appeal to them and fit into their lifestyles.

5. Impact of project:

To date 61 families have engaged with the project and 10 families (28 people) engaged with, and completed, a 12-week course of sessions with some participants attending 58 of a possible 68 sessions. Results investigating the impact of the project on health behaviours demonstrated that the intervention did not have a statistically significant impact on overall physical activity levels or sedentary behaviour, however all children and adults (excluding one) were meeting overall physical activity guidelines prior to engagement in the intervention and physical activity levels did increase for some individuals and families. The intervention did, however, have a significant impact on parental mental health and parental overall dietary quality up to 12 months after completion of the project.

6. Case study: Susan's story

Susan attended the sessions with her 10-year-old daughter. During the intervention period Susan was 48-years-old, unemployed (associated with existing health conditions), educated to GCSE level and lived with her partner of 14 years in a privately rented property. She also has a 21-year-old son from a previous relationship who still lives at home. Susan suffered from arthritis in her knees and was also diagnosed with depression, anxiety and agoraphobia. These conditions often prevented her from taking part in activities on her own and with her daughter.

Before engaging in the project, Susan was occasionally physically active and attended Slimming World for 12 months, losing around 20kg in this time. Before beginning the project, Susan's Body Mass Index was 44.6, classifying her as obese. However, in just the first 12 weeks of engaging in the PFP, Susan lost 9.12kg reducing her BMI by 3.6. After 12 months, Susan lost another 10.4kg, which took her total weight loss during the programme to 36.22kg.

Susan also increased her weekly engagement in physical activity by 53.83 minutes and improved her dietary quality which she attributed to the programme's structure and encouragement and motivation she had received from staff.

Now, Susan says that her healthy eating and food choices had become part of her everyday life: 'I don't even think about it, to be honest. It's just natural. It just comes natural now. I'd sooner go for an apple than a packet of crisps.'

During and after the project, Susan volunteered on other EitC projects such as Girls on Side and Tackling the Blues. In October 2015, Susan was offered a casual staff position at EitC and is now a valued member of the team on both projects.

7. Further information

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