IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION OF REUNIFICATION PRACTICE FRAMEWORK SCALE-UP

LEARNING POINTS FOR SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE

Shirley Magilton
Evidence Department

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NSPCC
EVERY CHILDHOOD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR
Impact and Evidence series

This report is part of the NSPCC’s Impact and Evidence series, which presents the findings of the Society’s research into its services and interventions. Many of the reports are produced by the NSPCC’s Evaluation department, but some are written by other organisations commissioned by the Society to carry out research on its behalf. The aim of the series is to contribute to the evidence base of what works in preventing cruelty to children and in reducing the harm it causes when abuse does happen.

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The people pictured are models.
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Key findings

The Reunification Practice Framework is an evidence-based resource for practitioners to use to assess whether it is appropriate or not for a child or young person in local authority care to return home. It sets out clear stages, with evidence-based actions to undertake at each stage. There is also an implementation checklist that accompanies the Framework (Wilkins, 2015). The use of the Framework has already been evaluated and so, in 2016, it was made available for other organisations to use as part of the NSPCC’s strategy for scale-up. In promoting the evidenced service to other agencies, the Framework can benefit more children than if it was delivered only by the NSPCC.

The process of scale-up is a new activity for the NSPCC, and the Reunification Practice Framework is one of several services that are being made available to other organisations to replicate. As this is the first time the NSPCC has scaled up services, an implementation evaluation was conducted for each service to understand how the process is working and what the barriers and facilitators to scale-up are. The findings will be used to improve the way the Reunification Practice Framework is scaled up in the future.

As well as exploring the facilitators and barriers to scale-up, the evaluation also explored whether the use of the Framework was sustainable and had become embedded in practice. Interviews were conducted with local authority staff who were either using the Framework or managing its implementation.
The key learning points are:

- Eight local authorities had taken on the Reunification Practice Framework and were included in the evaluation, but only one was using it in its original form and had plans for its use to be sustainable in the longer term.

- The ongoing or sustainable use of the tool was affected by a background of local authority restructuring. There were examples of strong initial implementation of the tool, but this could then falter, with the Framework falling into isolated and sporadic use. However, some local authorities had not ruled out reintroducing the Framework in future.

- There was no clear pattern between different initial funding or support contexts and whether the use of the Framework became sustainable.

- All staff interviewed valued the Framework for making evidence-based decisions about reunification.

- However, tool fidelity was not maintained, with most authorities amending the Framework into their own bespoke use, due to issues about its length. The future roll out of the tool will give guidance on what should be included in a shorter version of the Framework.
1. Background

The Reunification Practice Framework (Link) (Wilkins & Farmer, 2015) is an evidence-based resource for practitioners to use to assess whether it is appropriate or not for a child or young person (up to the age of 18) in local authority care to return home. It aims to support practitioners and managers to apply structured professional judgement about these decisions. It also helps families and practitioners understand what needs to change to make a move home appropriate and to set goals, access support and services, and review progress. An implementation checklist is also available for staff leading the implementation of the Framework.

The Framework had a number of stages of development. ‘Taking Care’ was the original Framework, developed by the NSPCC and Loughborough University, drawing on evidence of factors that support a child or young person’s return home. In 2012, it was piloted in nine local authorities with local authority and NSPCC staff co-working cases and was then evaluated (Hyde-Dryden et al, 2015; Farmer & Patsios, 2016; Gill, 2016).

Following this evaluation, in April 2016, the Reunification Practice Framework became available as a free download from the NSPCC website. This was the first time that the Framework could be used without NSPCC support and constituted the first stage of making the tool available to other agencies.

In addition, nine local authorities agreed to take on the tool after the initial evaluation with some support and/or funding in place to help them do this. These scale-up sites are the focus of this briefing. They had three distinct ‘starting contexts’:

- **Department for Education (DfE) pilot funded local authorities**: DfE funding supported pilot revision and NSPCC implementation in three local authorities.

- **NSPCC/local authority co-working**: These were local authorities that had piloted the Taking Care Framework and received free, bespoke NSPCC training. Cases became managed solely by local authorities.

- **Local authorities that were neither of the above**: In these local authorities, the NSPCC, on request, offered (free) consultation and participated in discussions with managers about implementation governance.
2. Evaluation aims and methodology

This evaluation investigated local authorities’ progress from implementation to sustainable use of the Framework— and barriers and facilitators associated with this. It builds on previous evaluations of the Framework that had focused on implementation.

By ‘sustainable’ we mean that the implementation of the Framework had become embedded in practice by all relevant staff and no longer had a pilot or ‘new initiative’ status.

The Reunification Practice Framework is one of several NSPCC programmes being scaled up for implementation by other organisations; any learning from this evaluation has implications for how the NSPCC continues with this, and how local authorities can be best supported during the process.

Nine local authorities that had commenced implementation more than one year ago were identified to be part of this evaluation. This was based on an assumption at the NSPCC that the implementation would lead to sustainability within this time frame.

Methodology

The methodology was qualitative, with a semi-structured interview schedule developed for use in telephone interviews. The questionnaire’s focus was on sustainable practice, but covered:

• the process for implementing the Framework
• current use of the Framework
• whether the use of the Framework is embedded into practice
• barriers and facilitators to embedding the Framework into practice
• future plans for use of the Framework
• benefits of using the Framework for practitioners and families.
All nine local authorities were approached about taking part in the evaluation. The intention was to interview a sample of strategic and practice managers and practitioners with experience of the Reunification Practice Framework in each local authority. However, there were significant difficulties identifying and contacting relevant local authority staff – generally due to staff changes following restructuring. As a result, the methodology was changed to one of opportunistic sampling with staff who might know something of the Reunification Practice Framework use in their area. Sometimes this meant that not all areas of the interview schedule could be explored or covered in great detail. For some areas, it also involved interviews with the NSPCC staff who provided training or consultancy to the local authority instead, as they could often give insights about the approach the area had taken to implementation if relevant staff were no longer in post.

In total, 17 telephone interviews were held, consisting of between one and three people per area. The majority were service or practice leads or social workers; no strategic leads were identified. While some local authority staff had a longer-term experience of the Framework, for several this was much more recent. Unfortunately, in one local authority no one was identified for interview (from either the local authority or the NSPCC), so no evidence was gathered. These findings are based on a relatively small sample size and describe progress made in the eight areas where it was possible to speak to someone. They may not represent the progress made in other local authorities using the Framework.
3. Evaluation findings

There was no clear pattern among the eight local authorities about whether or how the Reunification Practice Framework became sustainable practice. Local authorities were varied in their structural stability, funding, model of implementation, support from the NSPCC, resources and drive to sustainable practice. Out of this came some similarities – and many variations. However, the evaluation has produced learning points that assist with identifying factors that can be more or less helpful in sustainable implementation but are not necessarily causal in any specific situation.

In addition, as local authorities continue with implementation, future findings could be different. Indeed, there are indications that some local authorities that have struggled to date are now making new efforts to reinstate the Framework.

An ‘at a glance’ summary

While we have no clear picture, Table 1 sums up findings of progress from implementation to sustainability against three questions.

a. Has the Reunification Practice Framework (RPF) become sustainable practice?

b. To what extent is the Reunification Practice Framework used in its original form?

c. What are the future plans for the Reunification Practice Framework?
Table 1: Main categories of outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main categories of outcomes</th>
<th>Number of local authorities fitting the category, funding and NSPCC support</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  a. RPF embedded into sustainable practice</td>
<td>• One local authority (DfE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. In original form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Plans to continue with RPF and roll out to other departments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  a. RPF nearly embedded into sustainable practice</td>
<td>• One local authority (Co-worked/Taking Care)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. In amended form – although not shortened</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Plans to continue with RPF and roll out to other departments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  a. RPF nearly embedded into sustainable practice</td>
<td>• One local authority (Co-worked/Taking Care)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. In amended form – sections used as relevant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Plans to continue with RPF and roll out to other departments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  a. RPF embedded into sustainable practice</td>
<td>• Two local authorities (one ‘other’ and one DfE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. In amended form – shortened</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. No plans to continue when DfE funding ends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  a. RPF not embedded</td>
<td>• Two local authorities (one ‘other’ and one co-worked/Taking Care)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. In amended form with sporadic use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Plans to reinstate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  a. RPF not embedded</td>
<td>• One local authority (Co-worked/Taking Care)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. In amended form with sporadic use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. No firm plans to reinstate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  a. Progress unknown</td>
<td>• One local authority (DfE)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Local authority starting context

There is no evidence that indicates that sustainability was linked to a particular starting context but, nevertheless, it is important to understand the differences.

- **DfE funding**: Three local authorities were DfE funded sites. In one, practice had become sustainable with plans for continued Framework use. However, in another, Framework use had been tied to funding, with no plans to continue beyond the funding end. No contact was identified to talk to the third DfE local authority.

- **NSPCC co-worked local authorities**: Four local authorities had a history of using Taking Care and co-working with the NSPCC. It might be thought that this experience would lead to sustainable practice with the Reunification Practice Framework. In two such local authorities, the Framework was well on the way to being sustainable, with plans to continue the roll out. But in the other two, the tool was not embedded, and use was sporadic. Of these two local authorities, one hoped to reinstate it but in the other it looked as if it would be lost.
• ‘Other’ local authorities: In the two ‘other’ local authorities, one embedded the Framework to a sustainable level, but it was not part of a future restructure, so likely to be lost or used sporadically. The other local authority did not embed the Framework but there are plans to reinstate it.

Apart from the first category in Table 1, local authorities cannot be placed in order of effectiveness, as they may have managed well on one aspect of sustainability but not on another. Even where the Framework became sustainable practice, this could be short lived if the local authority was not planning on continuing with its use after funding ends. Conversely, two local authorities are planning to reinstate the Reunification Practice Framework after the first implementation faltered. Clearly, the Framework may ‘go under’, but this does not necessarily mean the end. Time indeed may alter some of these conclusions.

The following sections discuss what has been learned so far about what affects sustainability.
4. What affects sustainability?

4.1 Key learning points about strategy

Despite inconclusive findings, the following key learning points are apparent.

Local authority restructuring

Most local authorities experienced some degree of restructuring while they were implementing the Reunification Practice Framework – or still are – and certain issues had a particular effect on the Framework’s sustainability. These included strategic changes that did not include the Framework as well as staffing issues (discussed in the next section). In addition, the financial squeeze on authorities meant that they were – and still are – under enormous pressure to return a child home quickly if at all possible.

In two local authorities, restructuring led to only sporadic use of the Framework, despite an enthusiastic start. Another local authority is currently undergoing restructuring, with no plans for the dedicated team and successfully embedded Framework to be part of this. One local authority summed up the dilemma:

“Strategic and operational management are very committed, but the challenges of reorganisation and staff retention have been too great to overcome enough to embed the tool.”

(Local authority [LA] manager)

Strategic decision making and operational delivery

Local authorities varied in their decisions about how to structure reunification work and Framework use. There is no conclusive evidence about any particular choice leading to more sustainable outcomes.

Two local authorities created new, dedicated ‘reunification teams’. One of these commissioned a third sector agency to do this, who had for some time delivered community-based family work in the area. The other authority reconfigured their service to form a new team, seconding their Looked After Children (LAC) manager as lead. At the time of writing, neither local authority had plans to continue once their pilot period ends. In other sites, the Reunification Practice Framework became part of the LAC team or partnership. Interestingly, the Framework has either already been used or there are plans to use it in some Edge of Care cases.
If structure cannot tell us anything about sustainability, then the robustness of the structure used for implementation can. For example:

- **Strategic ‘fit’**: A close fit between the aims of the Reunification Practice Framework and the policy and strategic direction of that service was reported by one area as significantly affecting sustainability:
  
  “We had a strategic direction and culture to refocus on birth and extended families and the Reunification Framework fitted well. We also had 15–16-year-olds ‘drifting’ back home and the Reunification Framework allowed for more proactivity.”
  
  (LA manager)

- **Strategic buy-in**: To even begin, the importance of strategic buy-in and enthusiasm were emphasised. This included support from Directors of Children’s Services, Heads of Service, and Local Safeguarding Children Boards. However, restructuring or just staff changes often meant that previous strategic buy-in did not continue to be a priority. As one local authority summed up:
  
  “There was a change of Director in the summer and by the following spring there was talk of substantial reorganisation.”
  
  (LA manager)

- **Effective steering and operational groups**: Effective steering groups that maintained momentum and direction were reported to contribute to sustainability. In one local authority, operational sub-groups for communications, data, procedure and service support ensured that all facets of implementation were planned for:
  
  “The working group were all passionate, keen and wouldn’t let it drop.”
  
  (LA manager)

Conversely, implementation, and thus sustainability, faltered where the steering group had poor attendance and turnover of members, meaning momentum could not be maintained.

- **Champions**: Every initiative needs a champion; one local authority emphasised that at least two are required to mitigate against one leaving and momentum falling flat. Throughout, there were reports of ‘very committed’ reunification leads and strategic managers. But sadly, there were examples of a committed champion leaving and the implementation faltering.
• **Promotion:** Undoubtedly enthusiastic staff and managers enhance the chances of sustainability. Some local authorities were particularly proactive in promoting the Framework wherever possible. This included delivering presentations to other departments and distributing an information pack to other teams to increase familiarisation.

4.2 **Key learning points about tool fidelity**

There had been significant amendments made to the Reunification Practice Framework by local authorities. The next section explores whether training and support, usage, facilitating and monitoring were associated with use of the original form of the Framework.

**Training and support**

Staff turnover meant that it was difficult to find out exactly what training and support a local authority had received.

• **Training from the NSPCC:** This covered strategic and practice learning sets – with the NSPCC encouraging take-up of both. However, some local authorities decided against strategic training. In one instance, the cases allocated for using the Framework were managed by a number of different managers who had not received training – and therefore may not have been able to give appropriate support to practitioners.

A further issue was poor turnout for training as busy staff thought that they could easily pick up what was required themselves. One local authority did their own training and invited one of the Framework authors to take a master class for them. They progressed well with sustainability.

• **Building up familiarity, enthusiasm and confidence:** Some practitioners said they did not have appropriate cases to use the Framework with post training; this affected confidence. One authority increased enthusiasm and confidence by promoting an outcomes focus; their reasoning was that the tool was very good for evidence-based and, therefore, confident decisions.

• **Knowledge transfer:** This was a particular issue in one co-worked local authority where reports suggest that lack of knowledge transfer was the main reason for lack of sustainable practice. Local authority staff continued to see the NSPCC as ‘the experts’, so when co-working ceased, they felt deskillled and under-confident. This coincided with substantial restructuring that impeded the knowledge transfer further:
“There were other demands on social workers and a service restructure happening. At such a time of change, staff do what they must do, and the demands of new tools may get dropped. The training did not translate into the social workers becoming the experts.”

(LA manager)

In other co-worked local authorities, the NSPCC had offered limited general or individual support per case until it was clear that no further support was required.

- **Training new staff:** A continued programme of training that includes new staff is as important as the initial roll-out training. In one site, a new member of a team said she learned it by ‘just reading it’. Most adopted an approach whereby ‘lead’ mentors supported new staff ‘on the job’:

  “If a worker is identified to take on a case, and the Reunification Practice Framework is appropriate to that case, an initial appointment is arranged with the consultant social worker. She will then support the worker using it, including ‘touching base’, even if the worker says they are getting on ok with it.”

  (LA manager)

- **Ongoing support:** Local authorities were creative in how they developed support. This included:
  - Mentors to encourage less confident staff
  - Regular ‘check ins’ with the ‘lead’ to catch any difficulties
  - Open house meetings for any staff to bring queries to
  - Supervision and support from staff who know and understand the Framework
  - A plan that included new staff and agency staff
  - Drafting anonymised ‘example’ sections so staff can see what the Framework might look like in situations of substance misuse or mental health, for example, and what evidence might look like

**Tool fidelity and use**

While all interviewees who had used the Framework were extremely positive about it, in all but one local authority amendments had been made that reduced fidelity to the original tool – often considerably.
Original or amended formats

Only one local authority used the Reunification Practice Framework in the original format. Otherwise, much was said by other local authorities about the reasons for amending it; all staff stressed that the amended Framework was very valuable and useful to them.

- **Framework length:** The main reason for amendments was the length of the document and time it took to use. Of the seven local authorities that had made changes to the tool, only one local authority made changes that resulted in the tool retaining a similar length. Shortening the document included missing out sections or tasks. One local authority had amended the entire document into a summary.

  One reason for this may be that the Reunification Practice Framework was initially piloted in NSPCC co-worked local authorities with the advantage of learning and using the new tool with protected caseloads. This arrangement perhaps did not identify issues with the length of the tool that practitioners using the Framework in non-co-worked local authorities with larger caseloads faced.

- **Shortening the six-month time frame of the Framework:** The Framework length issue had also resulted in it being worked over fewer months. One local authority had reduced it from six to four months because of court process and timings. It was not clear what was missed out to achieve this time reduction.

- **Shortening into tailored use:** There were examples of local authority leads making a decision to change part of the Framework for practitioners using it in their area. There were also bespoke changes made, driven by individual staff tailoring it to suit their cases and time management.

  “It is long to use. We use it as we feel appropriate, so it has been tailored, but is the basis behind our assessments.”

  (Manager)

- **Sections valued:** Despite bespoke use, it was very clear that certain sections and ways of working were valued and kept. Most of all, practitioners valued and gained confidence from how the Framework allowed for the balancing of evidence-based protective and risk factors. One interviewee summed this up as:
“The Reunification Practice Framework enables staff and parents to think creatively and realistically about risk and protective factors together – not just one or the other. The tool is good at balancing both – difficult to analyse otherwise.”

(Lead social worker)

Valued sections and guidance included:

- The classification of risk – particularly the Risk Classification Table
- Goal setting for parents with timescales
- The evidence basis and guidelines as to what the steps are based on
- The emphasis on the process being gradual over time

- Chronology section: Only three local authorities used the chronology section in full. Others found the tasks, especially evidence gathering in long-term cases, too time consuming. There were additional issues in finding an independent person to undertake the task (as suggested in the Framework guidance). One local authority was using Independent Reviewing Officers – but admitted that finding a suitable reviewer was a challenge. They had developed a checklist to help “make a long task more manageable”.

Some local authorities asked newly qualified social workers or student social workers on placement to undertake the chronology, closely supported by seniors. This provided a valuable way of identifying important patterns that could otherwise be missed. One of these authorities had put the chronology section on their system for use by any practitioner. It was summed up as: “Fab!”

- Adaptation to a toolkit: All of the above suggests that, in many cases, the Framework has become a ‘toolkit’ from which useful sections or tasks are taken. Interviews highlighted how useful staff found this ‘toolkit’ approach and did not think it was in any way a less effective method of reaching a decision.

Use of the Framework with different cases

All interviewees reported that they used the Framework (albeit amended) for cases where a decision was required about whether a child could return home. It was equally valued in cases that resulted in a reunification as well as those where a child or young person remained in care.
“During the process, the complexity of the dynamic between them (parent and child in care) was very apparent. Both changed their minds and stopped engaging. We still think the Reunification Practice Framework was beneficial as we now have an analysis of the situation to this point.”

(LA social worker)

It was repeatedly stressed how useful the Framework was for court process. However, other wider uses emerged that managers said were based on the Framework’s robust evidence basis. This of course, extends the eligibility criteria.

- In some local authorities, the Framework was used (or there were plans to use it) with Edge of Care cases. One local authority was considering renaming the Framework to encourage a wider usage than purely reunification cases.
- One local authority had used it for long-term neglect cases, plus an adoption breakdown case. The chronology section had enabled them to analyse patterns over time and this was reported as very valuable in giving the worker confidence in how to proceed with the cases.
- Social workers said that even if they were deployed to another team, they would use the tool in future work if it was appropriate to a case.

Facilitating and monitoring use

The sustainability of a new tool needs a supportive environment that can monitor who is doing what. This has overlaps with earlier comments about both training and tool fidelity.

- **Protected caseloads**: In some local authorities, formal training was followed by a period of protected caseloads (eight per social worker in one authority). This gave staff time to learn to use a new tool that, initially, took longer to use – simply because it was unfamiliar.

  Nevertheless, either because protected caseloads came to an end (or were never there in the first place), the pace of work and high caseloads meant that some staff went back to previous, more familiar ways of working that they found quicker to use.

- **Mandatory use**: Only one local authority had made the Framework mandatory to use – and in its original format. The social work lead stressed that key to mandatory use was making the tool very familiar to all relevant staff and putting in adequate and continued support to ensure this happened.
“If you are going to do something – do it well; we should have been assessing like this anyway.”

(Lead social worker)

In the other local authorities, the approach was one of encouraging staff to use the Framework rather than insistence.

One lead had developed a matrix indicating staff take up of the Framework. Two local authorities were devising monitoring matrices to track case progress within the given timeframes. Another had a workflow diagram that divided the Framework process into ‘easy to see’ stages.

However, although some managers were keen to monitor use – and put in additional support if this was identified as a need – in most local authorities, while it was assumed that staff were using the Framework, the bespoke formats meant that it was not known exactly how it was used or who was using it.

- **Other tools used:** Reports varied as to whether the Reunification Practice Framework was the sole tool used. Two authorities confirmed that it was, and another was phasing it in by using it for each new, relevant case. Others said it was one of several tools to be used where relevant.
5. Conclusion

This evaluation has shown the extent of the variations that affected the sustainability of the Reunification Practice Framework. From the challenging contexts of restructuring that local authorities found themselves in, to the pressure of caseloads leading to shortened versions of the Framework, a varied picture emerges.

We can, however, take note of the overwhelming appraisal of all staff interviewed – that the Framework was and is a valued way to assess cases to inform decisions about reunification.

A fundamental principle of implementing evidence-based programmes is that they are implemented in their tested form. However, apart from one local authority, changes have been made to the original Framework, with it either being shortened or used in a more bespoke manner. This was not a reflection on the quality of the tool, but more on the length of time it took to complete. Previous research has shown that encouraging organisations to make adaptations to a programme so that it fits with their practice can help with sustainability (Chambers et al, 2013), although this did not always lead to the tool becoming sustainable within the local authorities in the evaluation. This shows the difficulties of implementing evidence-based tools in a different context to the one it was tested in and the need to monitor what is actually happening in practice. It also suggests that tools should be tested in a context as close as possible to the one in which they will ultimately be scaled up, to identify and resolve any potential implementation difficulties. Given the context that many local authorities are operating in and the time pressures faced, this makes it a difficult environment in which to try and introduce new programmes (Greenhalgh et al, 2012). The NSPCC will give guidance about what a shortened version of the tool should include.

Implementation literature suggests that it can take two to four years for a programme to become fully implemented and even longer for it to become sustainable (Fixsen et al, 2007). Although the findings on sustainability of the tool were disappointing, they may not be surprising given that they were a snapshot picture taken a year after implementation started. Progress will evolve in the local authorities; we can already see areas that had previously faltered now reinstating the Reunification Practice Framework, alongside successful areas abandoning use due to funding cessation. This evaluation tells us that ‘sustainability’ is an evolving work and not a fixed event.
6. Recommendations

The recommendations for further scale-up of the Reunification Practice Framework arising from the evaluation and the actions the NSPCC plan to take to address them are given in Table 2.

Table 2 – Recommendations and actions to address them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation barrier</th>
<th>Actions NSPCC are taking</th>
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| Local authorities are not always aware of what it takes to implement the Reunification Practice Framework and had stopped implementation or did not plan to continue it. | • Offering webinars with strategic leads at an early stage in implementation to describe the Framework, the benefits of using it, key points from implementation science about implementing interventions and to assess the readiness of the local authority to take on RPF.  
  • Building in more pre- and post-implementation support, including more regular contact with adopting organisations and providing them with more templates, tools and assets to assist them to use it in practice. |
| Practitioners do not feel confident about using the RPF and not all managers and practitioners have been trained. | • Improving the ‘train the trainers’ model so it is easier for authorities to run more training for new staff. Empowering authorities to take responsibility for the RPF.  
  • Licensing the training and having assessment modules so understanding can be assessed and additional support provided, so that practitioners feel more confident to deliver the RPF.  
  • Setting up more ‘community of practice’ events and an online chatroom so that practitioners can share learning and solutions to difficulties with other authorities.  
  • Devising a handbook to sit alongside the RPF and making it easier for practitioners to use. |
| Local authorities are shortening the RPF or cutting sections from it to save time. | • Discussing with the Framework authors what guidance can be given to LAs about how to stay as close as possible to the model and which sections can be cut if a LA decides to use the RPF as a toolkit rather than in its entirety. |
| Local authorities are widening the use of the RPF and using it with other cases. | • Learning from LAs that have changed the RPF and used it with different types of cases.  
  • Renaming and relaunching the RPF and producing updated guidance about the type of cases it is suitable for. |
| Future Frameworks produced by the NSPCC should be shorter and be piloted in the environment in which it will be used. | • Committing to try and test more new NSPCC services in the environment in which they are intended for. This had included testing some programmes in partnership with external organisations.  
  • Where the NSPCC has IP for a tool, we will reduce the length and shorten completion times and test this before scaling-up to other organisations. |
References


