

# Enabling Early Child Development in Ealing (ECDE) project

## What was this research about?

A study in 2023 gathered perspectives of 77 parents/carers and 10 children across Ealing borough on early child (age 5 and under) services and support.

It aimed to understand how services could be improved so every child across Ealing borough has the best start in life.

## What did the research do?



Worked with community groups, and people from the council and NHS to design the research



Used focus groups and interviews to get a "rich picture" of families' experiences



Engaged diverse participants, including translators so non-English speakers could join



Also interviewed 13 key local health, council, community and voluntary sector staff

Yan Krukau








# What were the main findings?

## What families value:

-  Support for parents wellbeing, adequate housing, children's play and social interaction
-  Peer connections between parents and carers to share information and reduce loneliness
-  Trusted community organisations for local, holistic support
-  Being heard and having the space to express their views

## Challenges faced:

-  Loneliness and poor mental health of parents/carers
-  Unmet housing needs and difficulty meeting other basic needs
-  Language, cultural, and sometimes digital skills barriers to getting advice and support
-  Unconnected services and confusing information which is hard to navigate
-  Limited knowledge of how to support healthy brain development and school readiness




# How can support for early childhood development be improved?


## 10 key opportunities

- 1** Better coordinate and integrate health, council and community early years services
- 2** Expand accessible and easy to find information
- 3** Take a caring, empathetic approach in all services
- 4** Build cultural competence of services
- 5** Further support key community organisations and links with private nurseries
- 6** Enable parents and carers to connect with each other
- 7** Engage diverse families to design solutions together
- 8** Address housing and basic needs to reduce family stress
- 9** Earlier support for additional needs and complex challenges
- 10** Raise awareness of importance of caregiver-child relationships and home learning

# What has been the impact of the research so far?

 Informing the start for life offer and improvements to early years service integration and quality

 Changing how some specific services engage and listen to parents/carers including health visiting and children's centres

 Spurred new Parent Carer Forum for Ealing borough children's centres



Santiago Ripoll

# Want more information?

> Read the full report and other research briefings, and view the project's 'River of Life' arts piece: <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/18224>

> For information about or to join the Ealing children's centres' Parents and Carers Forum, please email Katy Gamble at [GambleK@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:GambleK@ealing.gov.uk)

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