



Families: Social Exclusion and Places of Safety

Project News

September 2019

What is FSEPS about?

The FSEPS (Families, Social Exclusion and Places of Safety) project challenges the social exclusion that many women and their children experience as a result of domestic violence. In the FSEPS project, we are developing a programme of activities to support mothers who live with their children in refuges or other places of safety. We are designing the programme to combat social exclusion, aid recovery from abuse and facilitate stable, sustainable family relationships. The programme will include learning activities, supported free play, educational trips and communal activities to create positive memories for these families. Through this programme, families will gain active life-skills and build the confidence needed for healthy reintegration into mainstream society while, at the same time, challenging experiences of negative and abusive behaviour.

fseps.eu

First research results

The first stage of the project was to build an evidence base that identified existing knowledge, policy and experience. The evidence base comprised a review of existing policy and practice and a needs analysis that identified what the women and children lacked while living in refuges and other places of safety. The evidence base provided the main focus for the opening partner meeting held in Birmingham in November 2018.

The project partners explored the situations in their respective countries in order to identify commonalities as well as national and cultural differences between countries. The partners conducted national studies of policy and practice and then engaged with women and their children who live in refuges and places of safety as well as professionals who work with them.

The results of this stage in the FSEPS project are described in the summary report, which can be downloaded [here](#)

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Developing the programme of activities

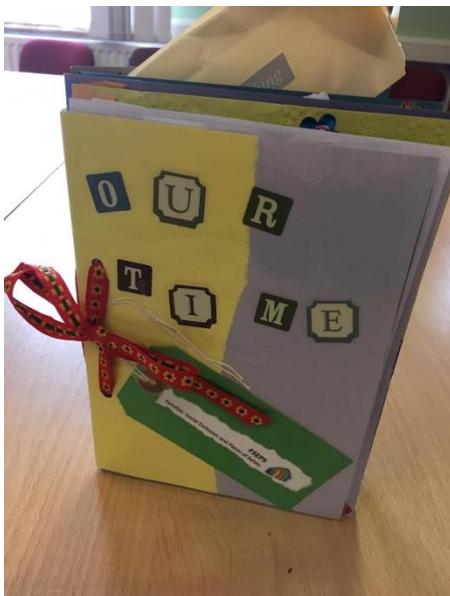
Following the creation of the evidence base, we met in Asti, Italy, in June 2019 for the second project meeting in which we focused on collecting and developing ideas for the activities that should be included in the FSEPS programme.

We identified five programme themes under the umbrella of building confidence and self-esteem as follows:

-  Isolation;
-  Communication & Respect;
-  Building Trust;
-  Managing Emotions;
-  Positive & Healthy Futures.



The project team tried out some creative activities



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Within these themes, we hope to ensure that the activities will be flexible and suitable for the different national and cultural contexts of the partnership countries. Ideas for the activities were drawn from the evidence base described above and will contain a mixture of group activities such as art and craft, music, daytrips and cooking sessions. Above all, these activities encourage mothers and children to spend quality time together.

Train-the Trainer seminar

It is important that we provide training for professional staff working in refuges/places of safety to enable them to use the programme of activities. Hence, a train-the-trainer event will be taking place on 4th – 5th November 2019 in Stafford, UK. In this event, we will present the programme, activities, and train professionals from each partner country to deliver the programme in their own countries. Participants will be encouraged to evaluate the programme, suggest changes and discuss challenges for implementing the programme.

Outlook

All the training material that we have developed in FSEPS will be available on the project website (link). The website will contain an online repository of material; it will also host a series of webinars in the second year of the project to reach out to other professionals working in the field of gender violence and highlight the FSEPS programme.

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