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## **Beyond burden:** engaging beneficiaries as equal partners in evaluation

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- Employee owned consultancy specialising in evaluation, research, consultation and engagement
- Values-driven organisation – focus on **social impact**
- Active in: health, housing, local government, children & young people



## INVOLVING BENEFICIARIES IN EVALUATION



“Enabling participation”

“Ensuring inclusion”

## EVALUATION DESIGN

- Well-known benefits of working closely with clients
- Going further: embedding evaluation tools within programme design
  - SCIE – Evaluation of Homeshare pilots (2015-2017)
  - Ways to Wellness – Data analysis of Wellbeing Star outcomes (2016)
- An example – Evaluation of Essex County Council Family Innovation Fund

  
**Health Education England**

 social care  
institute for excellence

  
Ways to Wellness

  
**England**

   
OPM GROUP

 Camden  
**ageUK**

## ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL FAMILY INNOVATION FUND: BACKGROUND

### OPM is evaluating Essex County Council's Family Innovation Fund 2015-2017

- Early help delivered through third sector providers via:
  - Coaching & mentoring
  - Counselling & mediation
  - Parenting support
  - Programmes to address risky behaviours
- Aims:
  - Improve family stability and resilience by enabling positive behaviour and relationships and connecting people with their communities
  - Reduce the likelihood of difficulties escalating and the associated need for statutory services.

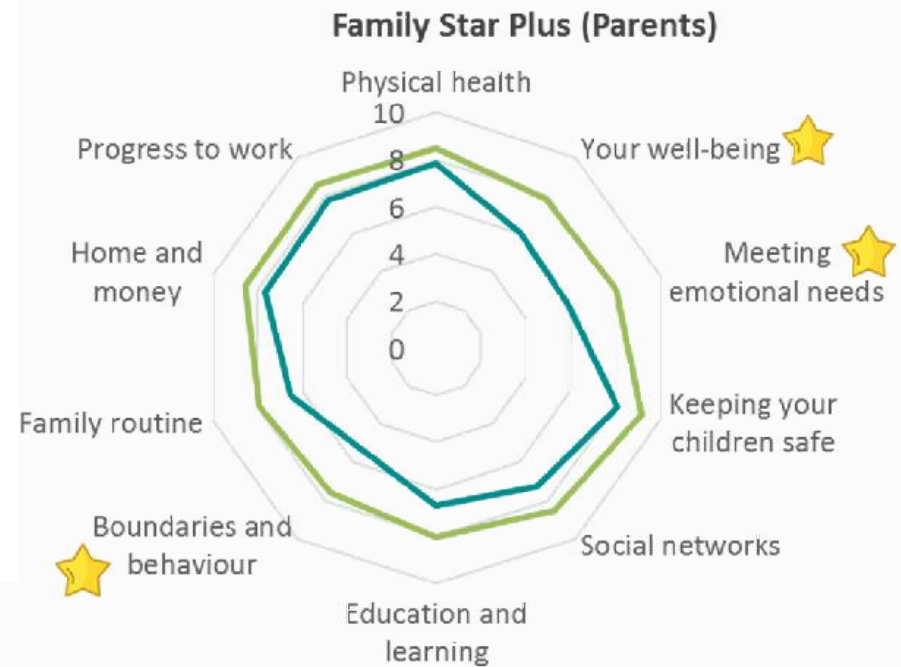
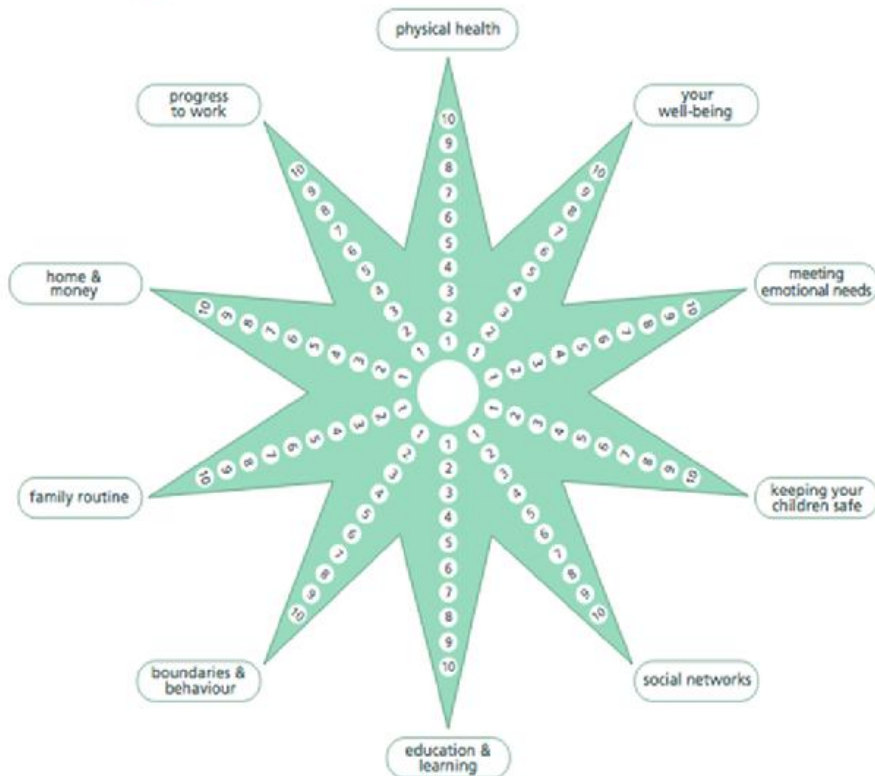


## ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL FAMILY INNOVATION FUND: OUR APPROACH

- Evaluation built into the design of the pilot
- Collaboration with client, third sector service providers, and young people to choose appropriate tools
- Mixed methods with a shared outcomes measurement tool at the centre of the methodology
- Outcomes tool chosen based on:
  - Realistic
  - Enabling
  - Validated

# ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL FAMILY INNOVATION FUND: OUTCOMES STAR

## Family Star Plus™



— First — Current

## ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL FAMILY INNOVATION FUND: OUTCOMES STAR FEEDBACK

*“I am a big fan of the star, not only does it enable us to guide where support needs to be, but it helps with the start of the relationship. The questions we are putting forward to young people can be done in a relaxed way, and that has helped me build relationships.” - Practitioner*

*“I really liked the star exercise, it made me think about things.”  
- Child*

*“That was good. It broke it down into sections of life. It was easy to use. At a glance you can see what’s changed from the start of the sessions to the end.”  
- Parent*



## WHY DID IT WORK?

### For participants:

- Service providers and service users were involved in choosing the most appropriate measurement tool
- Practitioners find the stars a useful addition to their practice (rather than an administrative burden)
- Beneficiaries enjoy using the stars; they help them reflect on their journey, and help to cement their learning

### For the evaluation:

- Providing an embedded mechanism to gather evidence about the impact of the programme
- Cost effective for evaluating a large-scale programme

## THINKING ABOUT ENGAGING BENEFICIARIES IN EVALUATION...

- What contexts have you used this approach where it has worked effectively?
- Contamination of findings or empowering participants?
- Co-production or validation?
- Self-administered or evaluator-led methods?

# Thank you