



Oasis Restore Secure School

# SHARED EXPERIENCE IN JUSTICE REFORM



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# ABOUT

## Executive summary

In July 2022, the British Parliament passed a bill creating a new secure school, Oasis Restore, for youth offenders between the ages of 16 and 19.<sup>1</sup> The school, set to open in the winter of 2023 in Medway, Kent,<sup>2</sup> will employ a team from [Oasis Community Learning](#), a charitable organisation that educates children at risk of expulsion.<sup>3</sup>

Oasis Restore will utilise the principles of Restorative Justice, which focuses on [addressing the needs of the victims and offender's responsibility through meetings and dialogue](#), instead of a traditional retributive approach.<sup>4</sup> However, the school faces the challenge of gaining the [trust of students](#) who may arrive with a negative attitude towards authority. Though Oasis Restore already [plans on giving students group therapy and has in-house psychologists](#),<sup>5</sup> we believe the needs and traumas of the incoming children are more complex than Oasis has currently prepared for.

To combat this, our team has created the role of a "Shared-Experience Mentor" who will have [one-on-one sessions with the students once a week to build trust and form connections with them](#). This mentor should, in one way or another, have a common experience with the child that the child significantly identifies with. These mentors will also [engage with the students during meal times](#), and will be [evaluated based on self-reported scores](#) by the children themselves, rather than traditional performance indicators.

We believe that this approach will be vital in reducing reoffending rates and making a positive impact on the lives of these children.



<sup>1</sup>(Secure Schools: Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 Factsheet 2022)

<sup>2</sup>(House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts 2021: 14)

<sup>3</sup>("Oasis Community Learning" [n.d.])

<sup>4</sup>(the Ministry of Justice 2015)

<sup>5</sup>("Integrated Healthcare Services to Oasis Restore Secure School" 2022)

# ABOUT

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## Introduction

Our proposition for incorporating the role of a "Shared-Experience Mentor" (SEM) within the staffing structure of Oasis Restore is a crucial step towards implementing effective justice reform.

The plan carefully outlines the [guidelines for hiring SEMs, their responsibilities, and the tools that will be provided to the children in the facility](#). By providing these children with a mentor who understands them and can build [positive relationships](#) with them, we believe that we can significantly decrease the likelihood of reoffending.

Additionally, this approach will [empower the children to better advocate for themselves](#) and understand themselves as they transition out of the facility. Overall, our proposition is driven by an [empathetic and inclusive mindset, taking into account the unique vulnerabilities, traumas, and struggles of these children](#).

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## Collaboration

The creation of the role of a "Shared-Experience Mentor" (SEM) was a collaborative effort between our team and Oasis Restore Secure School, a fourth element of custodial placements for youth offenders under the Youth Justice System. Over the course of two months, we worked closely with the [Oasis team, as well as vulnerable and excluded children, educators, and child psychologists](#) to gather insights and develop a strategy for achieving the school's ultimate goal of positively transforming the lives of the children in their care.

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## Team & Tutor

Throughout the project, our team was committed to approaching the design process with an empathetic, sensitive, and inclusive mindset. We firmly believed in the principle of:

**'Nothing about us without us'**

and made sure to involve the perspectives of those who would be directly impacted by our design intervention.

Our tutor, Judah Armani, played a vital role in guiding and challenging our thinking at every step of the process, his support and guidance greatly enhanced the meaning and value of our work.



Sayali Deshpande



Nishtha Aggarwal



Mae White



Nicole Oliveri



Tutor - Judah Armani



# BACKGROUND

## Context<sup>6</sup>

The United Kingdom's Youth Justice System is responsible for overseeing the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals aged 10-17 who have been charged with committing criminal offences. These offenses can range from violence, petty theft, drug abuse, breach of laws, sexual abuse, and more. When a young person is accused of a crime, they go through a process called "referral," which is similar to an arrest. If additional action is necessary, the young person is then referred to a Youth Offending Team (YOT).

The formal process for young individuals within the justice system begins with arrest and continues through to sentencing. After being apprehended for suspicion of committing a crime, police officers have the authority to either release them with a caution or refer them to the Crown Prosecution Services to stand trial at a Youth Court. "Remand" refers to the period of time in which an individual is awaiting trial. If found guilty, the court will announce a sentence. For more severe offences, the young person may be immediately transferred to custody.

Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) evaluate the needs of the young person and develop a plan to address them. This plan may include reparations to the victim, educational or vocational training, counselling, and more. YOTs also decide whether the young person should be charged with a crime and brought to court. If found guilty in Youth Court, they may be sentenced to custodial placement or community sentences. These placements can include secure training centres, secure children's homes, or youth offender institutions, where they may serve a sentence of up to 18 months.

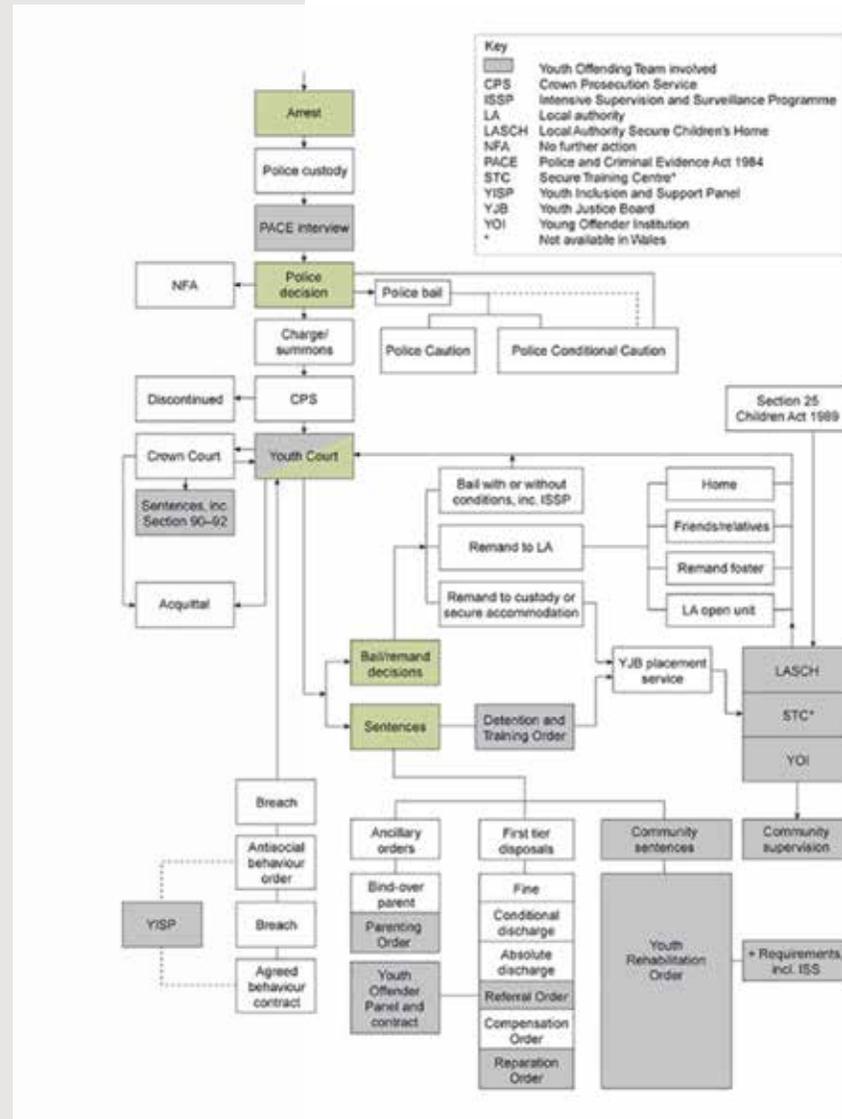


Figure 1

<sup>6</sup>(Youth Justice Board and others 2022)

# BACKGROUND

## Context

Currently, there are 16,732 children aged 11-16 across 421 Pupil Referral Units in England and Wales. The reoffending rate among youths is 34%, and as a result, the adult prison population has been steadily increasing since 1940 and is now at a total of 80,660 individuals.

### Change in the UK prison population since 1900

Annual figures, by UK jurisdiction



Source: MoJ (England and Wales) *Offender Management Statistics Quarterly*; Scottish Government, *Prison statistics and population projections*; DoJ (Northern Ireland) *The Northern Ireland Prison Population*.

Figure 2



# BACKGROUND

## Oasis Restore - Restorative Practices

Oasis Secure School is the latest addition to the custodial placement options offered by the Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board. Oasis Academy, a charitable organisation that established schools in vulnerable communities for students at risk of expulsion, was enlisted by the MoJ to create this new institution set to open in 2023 and hold 49 students under custodial arrest. One of the policies implemented at Oasis Restore is the use of restorative justice.<sup>9</sup>



Restorative justice is an approach that prioritises the needs of the victims and the responsibilities of the offenders in resolving conflicts and addressing harm. It aims to repair the harm caused by criminal behaviour and restore relationships between the offender, the victim, and the community.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> (House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts 2021)

<sup>10</sup> (The Ministry of Justice 2015)



**Restorative**

While the justice system has progressed from retributive justice to restorative justice, there are still questions about the effectiveness and value of this approach, particularly when Oasis Restore still must abide by the Ministry of Justice's key performance indicators such as:

Amount of times Oasis Restore needed to report to the authorities that an adult had to attack a child

Amount of times they needed to restrain the child

Amount of violent incidents inside the institutions

Reoffending rate over time

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### Design Brief

The objective of our project is to work in partnership with Oasis Restore to develop a comprehensive plan for the staff to effectively understand their roles, responsibilities, and interactions with students. Our goal is to create a design intervention that effectively addresses the needs of the youth justice system, including the crafting of roles, onboarding, and measuring success.

# RESEARCH

## Design Ethics

For our team, a research framework that is informed by ethical considerations was a critical priority in this project. One of our team members is neurodivergent and brought valuable firsthand knowledge and experience on the topic, as well as **expertise on how to ethically engage with and interact with children in a non-harmful manner**. We were diligent in ensuring that the mental and physical well-being of the children was not compromised for the sake of our research. For more information, please refer to the appendix for a comprehensive description of the measures we implemented.

## Design Process - Methodologies

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues within the system, our research approach involved speaking with a **diverse range of stakeholders**, including representatives from the justice system, educators, and subject matter experts.

We began our research phase by consulting with experts in child psychology, the justice system, and members of the neurodivergent community, as well as conducting desk research.



DESK RESEARCH

NAME	DESIGNATION	FINDINGS
Marrisa Oliveri	Adjunct Professor of Applied Psychology at New York University and Head of Counselling at Yorkville East Middle School	Daily life of a counsellor at a middle school that has a 30% economically disadvantaged, 44% minority background, 3% homeless, 27% specific learning disabilities, 2% little English proficiency students.
Carl	Musician at In-house Records	Spent his teenage and young adult years in a high security prison.
Naomi McGrath	Senior Operations Manager at Catch22	A charity that provides services to people in and out of probation.
Monica Henderson	Student at Royal College of Art	Spoke about her experience growing up around the custodial home that her father ran when she was a young child.
Olena	Counselling Psychologist (who is neurodivergent herself) practising with the Neurodiversity Affirmative Framework	Insights and stories she had during her professional journey about her neurodivergent patients.
Joseph Sue	Counselor at Belmont School Park	Invited us to come to Belmont Park School where he teaches to interview a few of his students.

PRIMARY RESEARCH

# RESEARCH

## Design Process - Methodologies

### INTERVIEWS

In addition to desk and secondary research, we also conducted interviews with a range of stakeholders using a set of research questions tailored to each group. These interviews provided valuable insights into the **experiences of children within and outside of the justice system**, as well as the **systemic issues and challenges faced by educators** and representatives of the justice system.

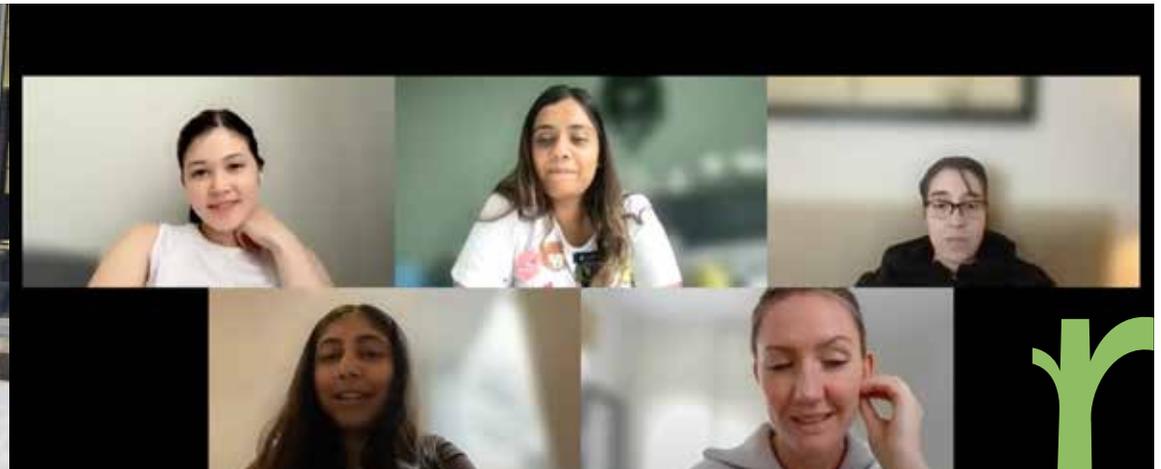
Subject matter experts on neurodiversity and child psychology helped us understand the unique challenges faced by neurodivergent individuals, such as lack of understanding and support for their learning needs. Carl's personal story of overcoming the belief that he was not smart and learning to read, despite struggling with reading black text on white paper, highlighted the importance of **identifying and addressing the root causes of problems rather than assuming a child is not capable of learning.**

Representatives of the justice system shared their observations of the systemic failures within the prison system, **such as lack of access to proper medication and psychological support, which can lead to increased chances of reoffending in the future.** It can take as long as 1 year to receive medication for a diagnosed condition, and can take up to 7 years to obtain a diagnosis for a neurological condition."

"("ADHA isn't 'overdiagnosed', quite the opposite, actually." 2022)



Meeting with Carl



Zoom interview with Naomi McGrath

# RESEARCH

## Design Process - Methodologies

### INTERVIEWS

Educators provided insight into the issues surrounding schooling, behaviour, and parenting and how negative experiences in these areas can shape a child's future. They shared stories of children who had attempted suicide at school, set fires in bathrooms, and destroyed classrooms, highlighting the importance of understanding and addressing the underlying issues that lead to such behaviour.

We also had the opportunity to interview a group of young people aged between 16-20 who were enrolled in K-Sports, a multi-sport facility in Kent. This provided valuable insights into how these children interact with one another and what they find amusing or entertaining. The interview was conducted in an open, familiar space, the cafeteria/bar of the facility, and we provided sensory toys for the children to use during the interview to create a comfortable and relaxed environment. The interview lasted for nearly an hour and a half, during which we mainly listened to the children playfully recounting stories together.



# RESEARCH

## Design Process - Methodologies

### SITE VISITS

We had the opportunity to visit the main site of the Oasis Secure School as part of our research, where we were able to **gain a deeper understanding of the daily routines and activities the children will one day experience within that facility**. Although the facility was still under construction we were able to observe the layout and designated units for different purposes, such as educational and recreational activities. For instance, we learned that each child will be **allocated a personal room**, depending on the wing they are placed in.

Our visit to Belmont Park School also provided valuable insight into the daily lives of children within the system. **We observed a chaotic but accepting atmosphere, where staff effectively managed to create a safe environment for the children to express themselves**. We parallelly conducted both primary and secondary research to draw comparisons and refine our findings, with desk research helping us understand the broader landscape and primary research delving deeper into the root causes of issues within different systems.



# RESEARCH

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## Objective

Our objective was to collaborate with Oasis Restore and design a comprehensive blueprint for the staff to effectively understand their roles, responsibilities, and interactions with the youth. Through an in-depth research process, we aimed to identify areas where Oasis can support the children and create a design intervention that addresses the needs of the youth justice system. By working closely with the Oasis team, vulnerable and excluded groups, educators, and child psychologists, we aimed to **create a more inclusive and empathetic approach towards addressing the needs of the children in the justice system.**

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## Observations

A few observations from the K-sports interview were:

4/5 teens were nearly arrested, 2 were arrested, for some sort of crime (one for egging a store/house and the other assaulted an officer)

The teenagers had part time jobs in the past but **2 expressed that they had quit/been fired because they didn't like the people there**, one was explicitly rude to her colleagues because she felt they were rude to her.

One of the boys shared a story in which a kid called him and his friends some bad/rude names, so he pushed the kid onto the concrete and the kid blacked out. He said the parents got involved and they are trying to get ahold of him, but he laughs when he recalls the story.

The teens have been **exposed to alcohol consumption** at a very young age, around 14 years old.

One boy enjoyed causing trouble/engaging in disruptive behaviour because **he found it fun and he was bored most of the time.** He has engaged in public nudity and was chased by FEDs

The teens seemed to really like the Reading (music) Festival, but it also was a place of lots of stories resulting from drug and alcohol use.

A girl mentioned that she was able to get a lot of **one-on-one bonding time with a teacher** at her old boarding school and she built a really good relationship with her. She also said they were **both vulnerable to each other but the teacher initiated it** and that helped her trust her more

When asked about someone they admired, one boy said there was someone in the centre they worked with (a coach) that **he really respected/admired** and they got on well. He respected his professional journey.

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## Learnings

During the interview with the group of adolescents at K-Sports, a pattern of disruptive behaviour and criminal activity emerged. There was also a prevalent use of **dark humour among the group.** It is possible that some of the participants may have undiagnosed neurodivergent conditions, as their behaviours align with certain neurodivergent profiles. However, this remains unconfirmed.

**The punishment for their petty crimes appeared to be disproportionate to the severity of the offences**, which may exacerbate their emotional states. Notably, **anger management was a common theme** among the group. However, it is unclear whether this is a result of poor mental well-being or an undiagnosed neurological condition. Additionally, it was apparent that the teenagers were **capable of forming meaningful relationships with individuals they respected and who treated them fairly** and opened up to them first. These relationships are very much perceived as beneficial by them.



# SYNTHESIS

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## Findings

In summary, the youth justice system often deals with individuals who have reacted to a trigger in a difficult way to control. These reactions can lead to dangerous situations, such as possession of weapons or involvement in drug use. Many of these children may be high-functioning or adept at masking their neurodivergent condition, making it difficult for authorities to distinguish between poor character and neurological conditions when making arrests. It is essential to understand that every child and teenager with a neurological condition is unique, and a sensory profile can be crucial in helping them, their parents, teachers, and other authority figures understand and better support them.<sup>12</sup>

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## Key Insights

Therefore, it is essential that we as a society, including authoritative bodies, shift our perspective when interpreting the behaviour of children in the justice system. Rather than viewing their actions as inherently antisocial, aggressive, or erratic,

3 areas we believe adults can help the child in:

Relationships  
Identity  
Voice

we must recognize that these behaviours may stem from a lack of positive nurturing relationships, struggles with impulse control, or unique learning needs.

First and foremost, children need positive relationships with adults who can model appropriate behaviour, provide guidance and support during difficult times, and actively listen to their needs and concerns. Additionally, children often emulate the behaviour of those with whom they have close relationships.

Secondly, it is crucial for children to have a positive sense of self-identity. If they have been consistently told negative things about themselves, they may begin to associate themselves with a life of crime. Thus, it is important to challenge and change these negative perceptions.

Finally, giving children a voice and the ability to advocate for themselves is essential to prepare them for life outside the facility. They must have the ability to express themselves and their needs effectively.

These values formed the foundation of our research and prototyping phase, and addressing these areas will be key to creating a better community for the children at Oasis.

<sup>12</sup> (Milton 2018)

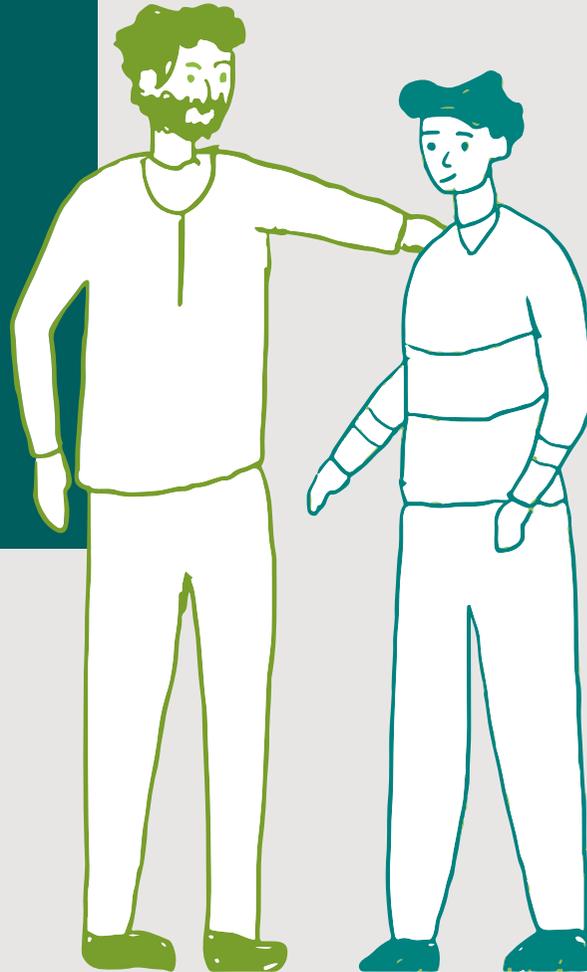
It's crucial that we as a society change our lens when viewing the child's behaviour.

# SYNTHESIS

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## Opportunity

In order to address these potential issues, it is crucial that Oasis places a strong emphasis on hiring staff who possess a **thorough understanding of neurodiversity**, and who are able to **effectively communicate** and **empathise** with the unique **needs and experiences** of neurodivergent individuals. Additionally, it is important for Oasis to create opportunities for **informal, one-on-one relationships** between students and staff, as this can serve as a crucial source of support and guidance for the students. By fostering positive relationships and creating a supportive environment, Oasis can help to mitigate the negative effects of past mistreatment and misunderstanding and empower students to thrive and reach their full potential.



# HYPOTHESIS

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If the students have a consistent, **healthy relationship with a positive model figure** that is nurtured throughout their time in the secure school, then the guidance they will get to pursue a positive pathway will **reduce the chances of them re-offending** significantly.

# THEORY OF CHANGE

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## Problem

The behaviour of children in the justice system is often viewed as criminal and punished **without understanding the underlying causes** of their actions.

## Invention

Introduction of a new role, the SEM, which provides students with **positive role models** who nurture **healthy relationships** with them, helping them to develop **self-awareness** and guide them towards **positive pathways** for their future.

## Impact

By providing students with understanding and support, they are given hope for a better future, different from their unstable past, and **reducing the chance of re-offending**.

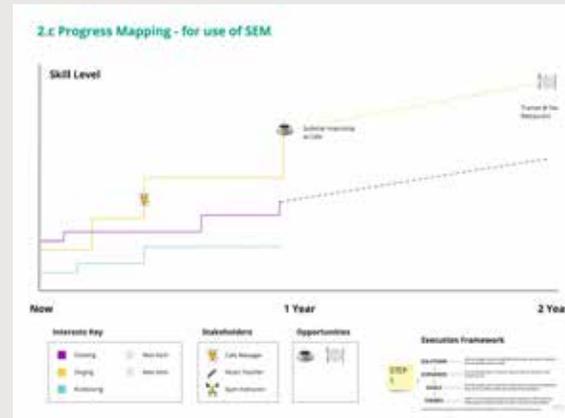


# IDEATION & PROTOTYPING

## Final Idea

To optimise the support provided to students within the secure school system, we proposed implementing a new role, the "Shared-Experience Mentor" (SEM). This individual would serve as a **friend, confidant, and advocate** for the students, while also acting as a **mediator** between the students and staff during escalated situations. The SEM would possess a **common experience with the students that they could significantly identify with**, and would be part of the Oasis ecosystem but not necessarily within it, allowing them to **maintain an outside perspective** on the school's operations.

We also developed a **suite of tools to aid the SEM** in their role, including the Relationship Map, Progress Map, and Incident Map to track student progress, Strength Cards to identify student strengths, and the Ikigai Map to help students discover their passions and purpose. Additionally, we **proposed using a Memory Box for students**, which would contain items such as a scrapbook, letter of recommendation, and Future Pathways booklet to assist students in transitioning out of the secure school system.



## FINAL DESIGN ARTEFACTS

### BACKSTAGE OPERATIONS GUIDE - for Oasis

- 📄 Cover Page
- 📄 Table of Contents
- 1. Hiring Model
  - 1.a Outline of New Role - SEA
  - 1.b Job Description
  - 1.c Requirements/ Qualifications/ Values
  - 1.d Roles & Responsibilities
    - 1.e Selection guidelines for hiring process
- 2. Service Blueprint
  - 2.a Strategic blueprint for the engagement between the key stakeholders in the Oasis ecosystem, including points of engagement, touchpoints at each point of the journey, and resources/artefacts required to ensure engagement.
- 3. Regulation Model
- 4. Conflict Resolution Model
- 5. Transition Framework - Alumni Connect
- 6. Neurodiversity Engagement & Communication Guidelines

### PLAYBOOK - for SEM

- A guide of 'quick wins' for the SEM to personalise according to each student's needs.
- 📄 Cover Page
- 📄 Table of Contents
- 1. Relationship Building Toolkit (for mapping & nurturing positive relationships of the student)
  - 1.a Relationship Mapping canvas
- 2. Aspiration Mapping Toolkit (for helping the student build an aspirations and strengths, contributing towards a positive identity)
  - 2.a Strength Identification
  - 2.b IKOGAI - Aspiration Mapping
- 3. Reflection & Advocacy Toolkit (for helping the student identify and express their needs better)
  - 3.a Incidences Timeline
- 4. Sensory Kit
  - 4.a Balls
  - 4.b Fidgets

### MEMORY BOX - for Student

- 📄 Mockup with Oasis branding
  - 1. Letter of Recommendation
    - 1.a. memoirs of the journey of the SEA and student - personalized (can be made by the SEA, or in collaboration with the student - create photoshop versions of examples)
-

# IDEATION & PROTOTYPING

## Prototype

We initially sought to investigate the ideal mentor profile for children and teenagers in educational settings. However, after attempting various profiling methods, we found that none were as effective as simply having a mentor be themselves in front of the children. As a result, we shifted our focus to **testing the tools mentors would use in their interactions with children**.

We developed three tools designed to aid children in understanding **abstract concepts, identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and considering their future goals in relation to their interests and talents**. We tested these prototypes at Belmont Park School, working with two staff members and three children, all around 14.

Despite some initial distractions, the children were able to engage with the tools and the staff members were able to keep them focused. Overall, we completed 40-60% of each tool during the session. The children were very observant and able to express their thoughts and feelings quickly though they would quickly get off topic. **The staff's patience and understanding significantly impacted the children's engagement with the tools**.

Our friend Joe, who participated in the workshop, remarked that the tools we created would be **very helpful for him** in a mentoring role, and he would use them in his practice.

## Relationship Map



## Ikigai Map



# IDEATION & PROTOTYPING

## Analysis

After conducting our workshop, we observed that the relationship mapping and strength card exercises were well received by the children. Still, the Ikigai map proved to be more challenging for them. The children appeared more comfortable discussing their current states rather than hypothetical futures. This exercise would be more appropriate for older students.

Although Joe provided positive feedback on our intervention, our team acknowledged that his natural rapport and ability to connect with children was a more significant factor in the success of the workshop than our prototypes. As a result, our research shifted towards refining the hiring process for mentors rather than solely improving the usability of the tools.

## Hiring Model

### Outline of new role

We are now looking for new staff for Oasis Restore - the UK's first nature school. Oasis Restore will offer a replicable opportunity to children and young people, who have become increasingly isolated, often as a result of high levels of trauma, vulnerability and threat. Our model for Shared Experiences Mentor (SEM) is focused on education, cultural enrichment, an exciting & safe environment with a holistic approach to life where every child is given opportunities to thrive. These shared experiences that enable young people to make informed choices and feel positive, productive, happy.

This is why we are now looking for individuals for the role of Shared Experiences Mentor - a SEM to support & mentor for students. It is your job to build trust and guide these students through their journey at Oasis while acting as a pivotal role model. You will look to them and help them solve problems and accompany them in to act as a mediator and advisor.

SEMs must be highly adaptable. A SEM candidate must possess self-reliance, confidence, responsibility, and consideration in the go about their daily activities at Oasis.

The SEM program will be continuously refined through iterative cycles with address the changing needs of students as they progress through their time at Oasis. Therefore, SEMs must be highly adaptable and have excellent organizational and interpersonal skills. The role of SEM will be responsible for the following:

### A. Advocating

1. Interviewing students and identifying problems they are facing at Oasis.
2. Challenging decisions about educational plans, if children are struggling.
3. Making referrals to teachers or external support services if required.



### C. Aiding Staff

1. Supporting and encouraging staff to take on more responsibility and to take on more of the day-to-day responsibilities of the role.
2. Identifying staff who are struggling and providing support and resources to help them overcome their challenges.



### What could be expected?

SEMs are essential for effective communication between students and members of the Oasis Restore team.

1. Accompanying students to therapy or student appointments at the school's request only if the student wishes. Providing support during therapy sessions, while being present at other medical appointments if needed.
2. Supporting the student in their learning journey.

### B. Modeling

1. Modeling positive behavior and attitudes to students.
2. Modeling positive behavior and attitudes to staff.
3. Modeling positive behavior and attitudes to the wider community.
4. Modeling positive behavior and attitudes to the wider community.



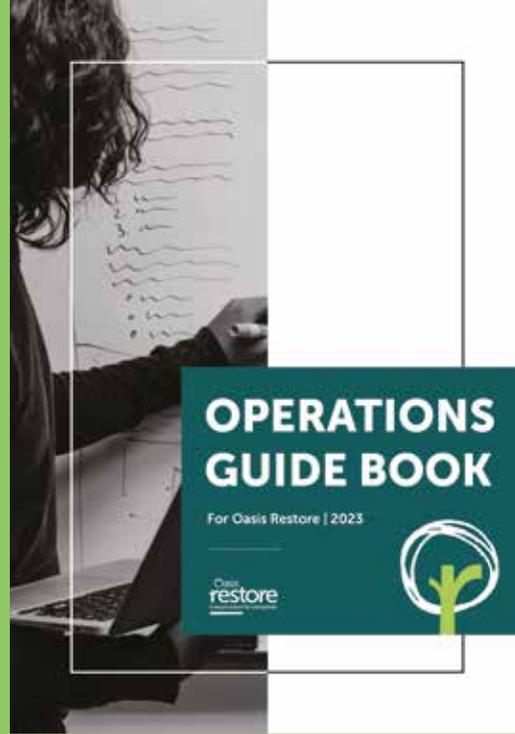
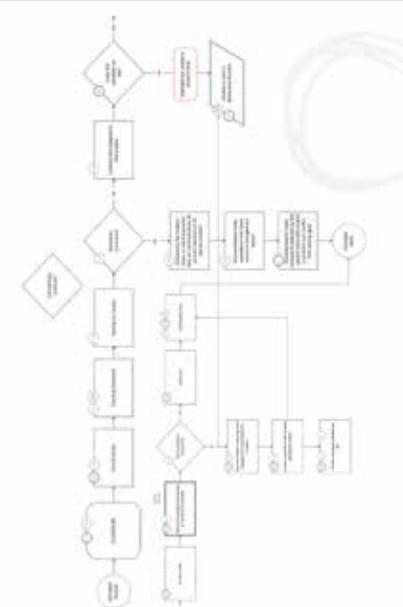
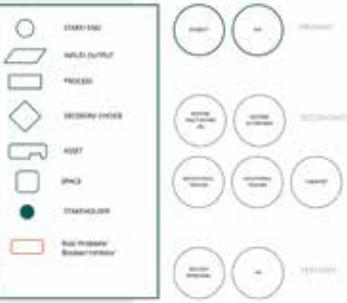
### D. Building Trust

1. Building trust with students about what they're feeling and allowing students to have a voice in their own lives.
2. Building trust with staff and other staff members through shared learning.
3. Establishing the necessary trust to help build and support the students in a community and care system.
4. Engaging with students in activities such as sports, music, and games, or just hanging out with them.

## Conflict Resolution Model

The model provides the general outline of the conflict resolution process. It is intended to be used as a guide to the process of resolving conflict. The model is based on the principles of conflict resolution and is intended to be used as a guide to the process of resolving conflict.

### Key & Stakeholders



# SERVICE PROPOSITION

## New Role - The Shared Experience Mentor

The Shared Experience Mentor (SEM) program is designed to provide each child with a **dedicated and trustworthy adult role model who is committed to supporting and advocating for them**. SEMs will be responsible for a small group of students, and will **work closely with their teachers** to ensure that each child's unique needs are being met. They will have access to each child's **sensory profile and previous records**, and will use this information to help the teacher tailor lesson plans and activities to the child's needs.

In addition to meeting with teachers, SEMs will also attend **staff meetings, eat meals with the children, and have an hour of self-care time built into their workday**. They will also have a dedicated 2 hours each week to spend with their students during enrichment activities, and will be available to **support them in case of any incidents or conflicts** that may arise.

It is important to note that while SEMs will play a supportive role in addressing any issues that may arise, they will not be directly involved in conducting restorative justice meetings. Instead, they will **meet informally with their students** at the end of the day to discuss any incidents that may have occurred, provided the child is willing and able to do so.





# REGULATION & ADVOCACY

## A. INCIDENTS REPORT

The Incidents Report is a tool that can be used to get a better view of all the incidents that have occurred during the reporting period. This is a tool that can be used to get a better view of all the incidents that have occurred during the reporting period.

Incident Report	Incident	Date	Location
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10

## A. INCIDENTS TIMELINE



## C. PROGRESS MAP



# Cost Structure

SEM Salary + Benefits: **£35,000** per year  
 x10 SEMs: **£350,000** per year  
 Oasis yearly operating budget: **£10.5 million\***

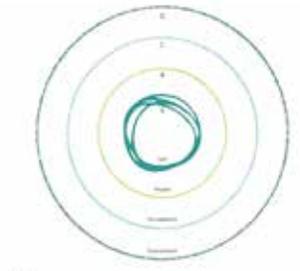
Estimated to cost 3.3% of yearly budget  
 Estimated to reduce reoffending by up to 40%

\*because this is a pilot programme, the National Audit Office has stated that the budget is an estimate only and may be increased if necessary. For Rainsbrook STC, HMPPS paid annual operating costs of £13.6 million in 2020-21.

# RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

## A. RELATIONSHIP MAPPING CANVUS

The Relationship Mapping Canvas is a tool that can be used to get a better view of all the relationships that have occurred during the reporting period. This is a tool that can be used to get a better view of all the relationships that have occurred during the reporting period.



## B. GUIDE CARDS

And the quality of the support given to staff is a key factor in the success of the programme. This is a tool that can be used to get a better view of all the support given to staff during the reporting period.



# ASPIRATION MAPPING

## A. STRENGTH IDENTIFICATION

## B. BOGAJ MAPPING



# Hiring Model

## Outline of new role

The Hiring Model is a tool that can be used to get a better view of all the hiring processes that have occurred during the reporting period. This is a tool that can be used to get a better view of all the hiring processes that have occurred during the reporting period.

## A. Advocating

- 1. Advocating for the needs of the community.
- 2. Advocating for the needs of the community.
- 3. Advocating for the needs of the community.
- 4. Advocating for the needs of the community.



## C. Aiding Staff

- 1. Aiding staff in their work.
- 2. Aiding staff in their work.
- 3. Aiding staff in their work.
- 4. Aiding staff in their work.

## What could be expected?

- 1. What could be expected?
- 2. What could be expected?
- 3. What could be expected?
- 4. What could be expected?



## B. Modeling

The Modeling process is a tool that can be used to get a better view of all the modeling processes that have occurred during the reporting period. This is a tool that can be used to get a better view of all the modeling processes that have occurred during the reporting period.



## D. Building Trust

- 1. Building trust in the community.
- 2. Building trust in the community.
- 3. Building trust in the community.
- 4. Building trust in the community.

## WEEK 2



## MENTOR'S NOTES

**Be Proud of This:**  
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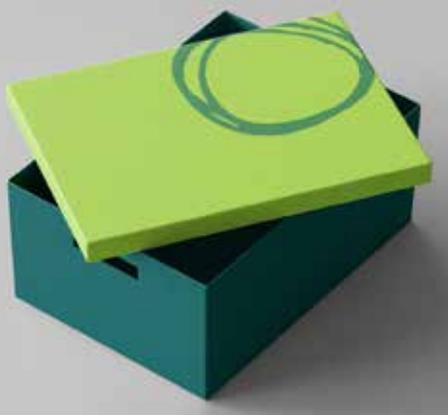
**Work on This:**  
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**Weekly Goals Set:**

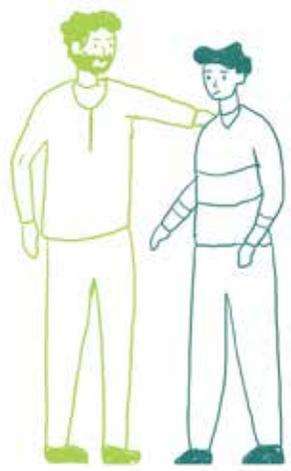
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**How to Achieve Goals Set:**

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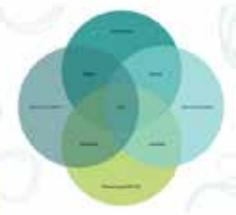
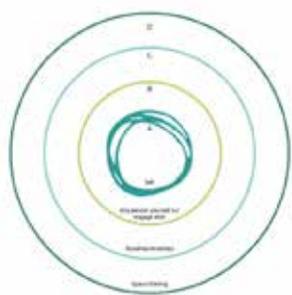


Meet George..



Incident Report

Student Name	Date	Incident #
Brief Summary	Parties Involved	Emotions Felt
Pre-Incident	During & Post Incident	Moving Forward



# CONCLUSION

## Measuring Success

Building strong relationships is the core responsibility of an SEM, and the success of this role is largely dependent on the quality of these relationships. To evaluate the effectiveness of the SEM, Oasis should focus on key indicators such as:

being able to identify strengths

a rise in instances where the student was able to emotionally regulate

an increase in student's healthy ties

To track these indicators, Oasis can use tools such as Strength Cards, Relationship Maps, and Incidents Timelines to effectively measure progress and make adjustments as necessary.



# CONCLUSION

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## Impact

Instead of viewing children in the justice system solely through a lens of trauma, we recognize the importance of positive relationships in preventing recidivism. Our proposed SEM program aims to provide guidance, support, and positive role models to young people in the secure school system.

The SEM will serve as a vital resource for the students' psychological well-being, helping to develop self-esteem, confidence, and resilience. The mentor will act as a sounding board for students, allowing them to discuss their personal and academic concerns, and provide validation and feedback from someone with more experience and knowledge. Additionally, the mentor will help students navigate challenges and set achievable goals for themselves by providing guidance and assisting in identifying strengths and weaknesses. The mentor will also serve as a positive role model, inspiring vulnerable young people who may lack role models or feel they lack the skills or resources to achieve their goals. This holistic approach helps the individual student and empowers them to better integrate into society, ultimately reducing recidivism.

We are not just introducing a new role, we are changing the organisational dynamics of Oasis. Because the SEM will understand the child, the other staff can leverage this understanding and provide better support. By working together, the whole will be greater than the sum of its parts.

## Future Development

In the future, we envision a whole network of people who leave the secure school and come together to form one body.

These young people will play an essential role in the justice field by raising awareness, advocating for vulnerable and underrepresented communities, and working to dismantle oppressive systems.

Graduates will partake in campaigning for policy change, organising community education and awareness, or working with grassroots organisations to support vulnerable groups of others like them. They would work to change societal attitudes and beliefs that contribute to discrimination and injustice, building a movement that can bring about change.

When students graduate from Oasis, they will be activists, not offenders. They would become the voice of others like them, with the goal of influencing change within the justice system; making it fairer and more effective for the next generation. Oasis will give them back control of their narrative, now it is up to them to write the next chapter.



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Oasis Restore Secure School

# OASIS RESTORE



# Guide to Communicating with Neurodivergent Children

## Understanding the symptoms of ADHD, Autism, and other Neurodivergent Groups that affect communication:

- **RSD:**

One symptom of **Autism and ADHD** is **Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria**, an unofficial term for the **fear and deep emotional outbursts we experience when people make remarks or negative comments about us**. It can also be triggered by behaviors, body language or a lack of response.

"Heartbreak is a universal human experience: that dull pain in your chest; the inability to eat, and the sadness gnawing away at you. But I realised that my heart was getting broken at least once a week, if not more, and it wasn't even anything to do with dating or crushes most of the time. It was about the way a friend looked at me when I made a joke, that mocking read receipt on WhatsApp coupled with no reply, or getting that polite-but-curt email from an editor saying: "Not for me thanks, but please keep pitching!" These are all simple things that, to a neurotypical person, would barely warrant the bat of an eyelid. But because my brain is unable to properly filter and process these rejections as being not a big deal, anything that can even be perceived as negative ends up causing me to spiral into a void of anxiety and self-loathing."

-An individual with ADHD



- **Hyperactivity/ Stimming:**

The common name for repetitive behaviours in neurodivergent people is **stimming, short for 'self-stimulatory behaviour'**. Some stims are barely noticeable and some are very visible. They vary in frequency and appearance depending on the person. **Stimming helps people with ADHD and Autism regulate their emotions and process their sensory environment**. Stimming is often a neurodivergent person's way of managing a situation and reducing stress and so **it shouldn't be stopped or reduced**.

- **Hyperfocus:**

Hyperfocus refers to an **intense fixation on an interest or activity for an extended period of time**. People who experience hyperfocus often become so engrossed they block out the world around them. Children and adults with ADHD and Autism often exhibit hyperfocus when working intently on things that interest them.

- **Time Blindness and Distortion:**

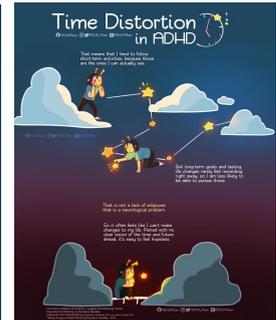
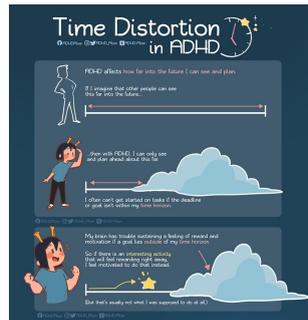
Folks with typical neurology often have an inner sense of how long minutes, hours, and days are, and how much they can do within each time increment. For those with Autism and ADHD, time tends to be amorphous, meaning it's not well defined. It may feel as if time is passing you by. **Essentially their brains aren't able to perceive the passage of time**.

**If you have ADHD, time-blindness is as intentional as colorblindness**

Yes, really. I've heard it from strangers and I've heard it from my own family: how could X ADHD behavior not reflect intention?

A colorblind person can't perceive differences between certain hues. They know those differences exist — and other people can see them. A time-blind person may know we should look at a clock more often, or leave work in time to meet a friend for drinks. That knowledge doesn't help us when we forget the clock, and maybe time itself, exists at all. When we don't perceive time passing, we also don't perceive you waiting at a table alone for us. We don't feel a deadline inching closer.

It's one thing to know a fact in your brain: this flower garden is full of rich, beautiful shades of red and green. I need to make sure I'm on time for this meeting. It's quite another to experience it, at a sensory level.



● **Task Inertia and Mental Fatigue:**

**ADHD and Autism can affect dopamine levels**, making it more difficult for the body to respond to this important neurotransmitter. Dopamine plays an important role in motivation, reward, pleasure, emotional regulation, and executive function.

**Low motivation or a low sense of reward from completing tasks** may cause tasks to **feel more exhausting**. Also, decreased executive function can make it more difficult for a person to plan and organize their life, contributing to a sense of chaos that may cause feelings of overwhelm and fatigue.

**When communicating, here's how to avoid triggering their RSD:**

- **Provide affirmation through actions and body language**, not words. Pay attention, appear interested and engaged, and take notes. These will all make them feel much better than just saying “thank you, that was really helpful.”
- **If what you are saying isn't authentic, don't say it.** Neurodivergent people have little understanding or use for social niceties. They are also very good at picking up when people are lying or just trying to humor them and they hate feeling like they are being talked down to or patronized.
- **Be extremely aware of your facial expressions and body language.** Any neurodivergent person will naturally scrutinize the unconscious signals you are giving and the wrong ones can shut a conversation down. Remember: RSD.
- **When people with ADHD get excited about an idea or subject they tend to interrupt you.** This isn't because they are trying to be rude and they don't even realize they're doing it. Because of the impulse control issues and their poor short term working memory, most likely they are just worried that they will have forgotten what they had wanted to say by the time a pause in the conversation comes up. **If this happens let them say what they want to. Wait for them to finish before you start talking again.** If you act put out (even subconsciously with your facial expression) it can trigger their RSD.
- **Neurodivergent people appreciate a good infodump.** Here is the term explained by an autistic person (Please note that not only autistic people infodump. Many ADHDers do it too):

*Infodumping is when an autistic person exhausts all of the information about a focused topic that they know of. To me, Infodumping is a love language; not only professing the love I have for a certain topic, I am also risking the rejection that comes with hearing somebody that I admire tell me that my favourite thing is meaningless to*

*them, because I want to develop a connection with that person and this is my hamfisted attempt at developing that connection.*

- If the child starts infodumping it is a sign that they trust you. **Do not cut them off, look bored, or try and get them back on point.** It will be seen as a sign of rejection and the conversation will break down immediately.

### Here's are helpful communication tips:

- **Start with the point, then explain or give more details afterward.**

You may fear that if you make a statement that sums up your point early, the person will tune you out for the rest of the story. But **a person with a compromised attention span needs to know the context of the details.** Otherwise they will have a hard time following.

*Here's an example to illustrate where Storyteller Sam wants to tell Listener Lucy about his new job offer:*

Sam: "Guess what happened to me today?"

Lucy: "What?"

Sam: "Remember I told you I needed to new phone case?"

Lucy: "Yeah." *[thinking, did he get a new case?]*

Sam: "Well, I went to the store to get the case, and it was super crowded..."

Lucy: *[thinking did he get the case at another store?]*

*No he didn't. The phone case is a minor detail that starts the story. But Lucy is distracted by this fact and is only half paying attention to the rest of the story.*

*Alternate approach:*

Sam: "Guess what happened to me today?"

Lucy: "What?"

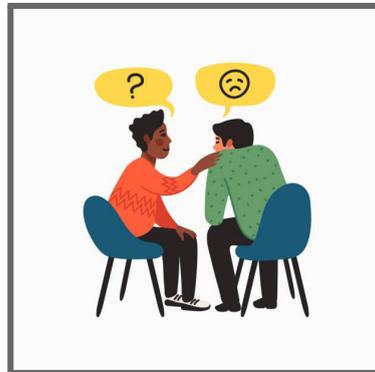
Sam: "I got a job offer. But it happened in the weirdest way. Remember I told you I needed a new phone case?..."

*Now, Lucy knows where this is going, and she will be more interested in knowing how making a trip to the store led to a job offer.*

**\*Note: this also applies to explaining things like ideas or systems. Start by emphasizing the main point of what you want to communicate, then go into the details.**

- **Provide them with a piece of paper and a pencil** so that they can write down any points or ideas they want to make as it comes to them, that way they don't have to worry about forgetting. Doodling may also help them focus on the conversation.
- If you are explaining a complex idea or system, **show it to them visually in the form of maps and diagrams, or any visual resource they can refer back to.** It helps them to concentrate if they can follow your ideas visually as you are speaking. They also may have trouble remembering small details of things so it will help them if they can see it and refer back to things.

- When a picture would work just as well as a word to represent something then use the picture (also helpful for children with dyslexia). They will probably have differing levels of literacy so **a picture will explain what you were trying to say better than a word**. For example instead of writing 'therapy' or 'counseling' just use this photo:



- **Keep your vocabulary simple and direct.** Don't use service design lingo it's like system, user, etc. Neurodivergents think abstractly, so words are a big deal to us. They're emotional, mental, and physical work. Therefore, we appreciate deep meaning in a short message. Details matter. We expect people to say what they mean and mean what they say. **Be as specific as possible with the wording you choose and make sure that each word precisely communicates your intention.**
- Neurodivergents don't do small talk. We enjoy parallel play and shared activities that don't require continual conversation. **Instead of starting out with small talk to establish a comfortable setting, try a game instead,** preferably one that involves some sort of physical activity.
- **Let them fidget, it helps them concentrate.** If you were allowed to bring a fidget toy with you then let them play with it while you are talking.
- **Let them go off on tangents.** Their mind will be buzzing with ideas and jumping back-and-forth. Let them talk and don't try and keep them on point. **Be patient.** There is a value in everything they have to say. Just because it seems disconnected to you doesn't mean it is to them. The dots are there, even if you can't connect them. **When they finish speaking you can ask follow up questions to clarify.**
- Don't expect eye contact. **Create situations where they don't feel obligated to make eye contact.** For example: talking while walking together, taking notes (you), giving them visuals to follow along with or sensory toys to play with.

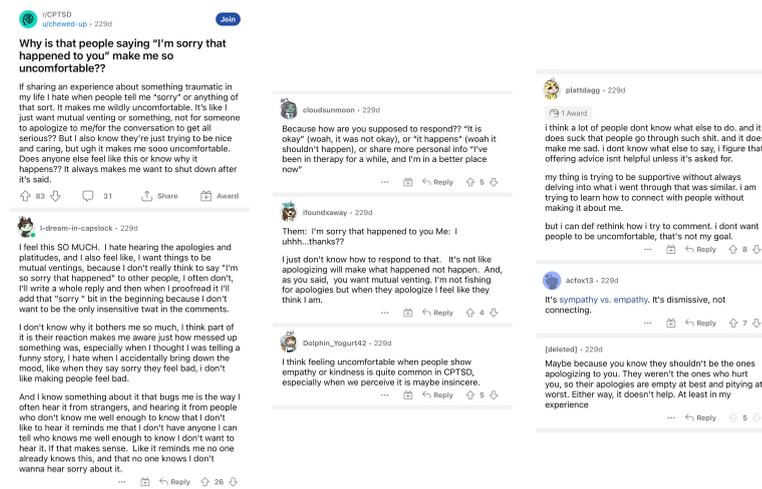
Examples of things to try might be: doing a jigsaw puzzle together, playing a card game like go fish, tic-tac-toe, or playing catch with a ball.

## Here's how to navigate conversations around trauma:

- **Let them guide the conversation.** They will go with their own speed and that is fine. Make sure that they understand they can stop the conversation at any time. Keep reminding them of this as well.
- **Practice empathy, not sympathy.** In its highest form, sympathy is meant to be a sort of compassion. But the truth is that sympathy too often comes in its lower form – thinly disguised pity. The result is often that the other person, despite your best intentions, often feels belittled.

**Sympathy can end up an unhelpful dead end.** When we offer sympathy, we tend to say “I’m sorry”, or offer some unasked for advice. We might even use sympathy to end a conversation or feel once we’ve offered sympathy, we have the right to then change the topic. In this way sympathy doesn’t offer the other person any real support. If they have heard the same platitudes often enough they will understand that you are trying to change the topic.

**Empathy, on the other hand, involves trying with great sincerity to understand what the other person is going through.** We don’t feel sorry for them, we truly want to take the time to hear them through. In other words, we listen to the other person. We might ask good questions as a way to understand them, and through answering them, the person might realise something about their situation that empowers them and helps them. So empathy is supportive and often useful.



- **Express empathy by:**

### 1. Actively listening

Real listening involves being totally present, not thinking about anything else than what the other is saying, and with no agenda but making sure that you understood them clearly.

### 2. Recognising and allowing them to have emotions

Empathy means seeing another person’s emotions as best as we can. So yes, this means letting someone cry instead of patting them on the back, going into sympathy and saying ‘poor you’, or trying to distract them with endless tissues. And it means letting someone rant instead of telling them to calm down. Remember, you are listening.

### 3. Being authentic

Sometimes, we listen, not to be empathic, but because we want to please the other person by making them feel good. We might even agree with what they are saying when really deep down it's not something we think or feel. Empathy is trying to understand someone, not trying to impress them. Being yourself, and experiencing your own emotions and responses as you extend empathy to another, then allows them to feel comfortable being more themselves and share more fully, allowing you to extend even more empathy.

#### Be sure to account for your own emotional needs before you enter:

**When neurodivergent people talk, it gets deep quickly.** We discuss what's real, our struggles, fears, desires, obsessions. There's no such thing as oversharing. That's OK. A lot of them will feel the intense urge to share their experiences and probably don't have many people they can talk to because of the culture within the prison. You aren't a member of staff or another offender, so if you've established trust then this will make you the perfect candidate to share with.

- **You will probably hear some very traumatic things, so be prepared emotionally before you go in.** Take deep breaths and practice mindfulness; whatever you have to do to cope.
- **Practice before the interview.** Using a mirror can be helpful; So can asking a friend to record a conversation with you. Go back and rewatch the video then analyse your facial expressions and body language. Ask yourself: what signals am I giving off? How might a neurodivergent child interpret this?
- **Recognise when to remove yourself.** If you don't think you can handle hearing details relayed to you about physical, emotional, and sexual trauma, don't enter the room. Even if you think you can cope, ask yourself: will I be able to maintain complete control over my body language as I am hearing these things? If you can't then ask a guard if you can wait outside. Any reactions has the potential to retraumatise the child, including leaving after the interview has begun.

**MOST IMPORTANTLY:** Remember the child's emotional needs come first. It doesn't matter if you don't get the information you specifically need. It is more important that the child isn't traumatized by your social interaction with them. **Our project matters less than their emotional well-being.**

Researchers are invited to use these questions in practical ways to support the design and implementation of ethical research practices. The questions reflect a range of ethical decisions to be made as challenges arise in matters concerning harms and benefits, informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, payment and compensation, and other related issues discussed in the Guidance section of the ERIC compendium. These questions also direct attention to the ethical principles of justice, beneficence and non-maleficence, and respect.

## 1. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

### ***Does this research need to be done?***

- Is the purpose of the research clearly defined?
- Will the research contribute new knowledge?
- What new knowledge will children contribute?
- • How have you ensured that the information being sought is not available elsewhere?
- • Is children's participation in the research necessary or can the information be obtained in other ways?
- • What steps have you taken to maximise protection of participating children and their communities from being over and/or under researched?
- • Who are the likely users of your research and in what ways have you taken into account the possibility that your research findings could be misused?
- Does the research enhance children's participation and other rights (under the UNCRC)?

## The Children

### 1.1 Is this research important for children?

- How will children benefit from this research?
- What would be the likely benefits for the individual child participating in the research?
- What form will children's involvement in the research take?
- Can children be involved in the planning of the proposed research? If so, what strategies will you use to facilitate this?

### 1.2 How will this research be inclusive of children?

- Have you established clear inclusion criteria?
- What steps can be taken to include marginalised/hard to reach children in research?
- Are any children to be excluded?
- If any children will not be included, on what basis will they be excluded and why? (For example, on the basis of their age, gender, sexuality, culture, ethnicity, disability, language, and/or family structure, mental health and well-being status? And/or for non-child specific reasons such as scope of the study, methodological choices, or financial, geographical or other constraints?)

### 1.3 How will children's safety be ensured during the research process?

- Are there any identifiable risks for children?
- What plans can be put in place to reduce risk?
- Are there children whose particular circumstances place them at high risk? If yes, who are they and why?
- What arrangements do you need to make to support children who become distressed or who disclose sensitive information?
- What actions will you need to take to respond appropriately if a child discloses harm or abuse?
- Who will you need to inform about these actions?
- How will you find out what community and/or professional resources and services are available to children if needed?
- Do you need to develop and/or implement safety protocols or policies in your project to protect children? If so, why and what protocols or policies are these?
- What possible stigma may attach to children if they participate in the research?

### 1.4 What information do children need to consent to being involved?

- What information do children need to enable them to consider giving their consent? (For example, in relation to participation, methods of data collection, dissemination etc.)
- How will you find out the information children need?
- Will you provide written information for children? If so, why?
- If you do not provide written information, how will you convey the information? Why have you chosen this method of doing so?
- Is there a designated person that the child (and/or parents) can go to if she/he has any questions or concerns (now and in the future)?
- What further information will children need (in long-term projects) as the study progresses to enable them to consider their continued consent, and at what stages?
- What procedures have been put in place to prevent children being coerced to participate?
- How will you communicate the decision to include or exclude children to them?

### 1.5 Have you considered your role in the research?

- What are your own values, assumptions and beliefs about: Children? Childhood? Their place in research? The context in which the children live?
- How will these shape the decisions you make about the research process?
- How do your understandings of culture (generally and in relation to the local cultural context) impact on the decisions you make in planning and preparing to do the research?
- What do you imagine might change as a result of involving children in the research?
- What beneficial outcomes will there be for children (both individual child participants and children as a social group) as a result of your research?

### 1.6 How well prepared are you, the researcher, to meet and conduct research involving children?

- What do you know about the children you wish to involve?
- How will you find out what you need to know about children?
- Do you have the necessary skills (technical and interpersonal) to involve the children in research (including, for example, skills in facilitating respectful conversations and knowledge related to children's ages and evolving capacities)?
- Do you have support and supervisory relationships in place (for example, with experienced researchers, relevant local groups, local child protection experts, local experts in the field of research)?
- Are you aware of the local legal definitions and regulations relevant to your research, for example, the definition of adult or emancipated minor, the legal age for employment, requirements regarding child abuse reporting?
- Have you considered, and sought appropriate advice, as to how you will respond if you become aware that children are breaking the law?
- Have you considered whether (and how) children will be informed of test results related to their health status which may result from their participation in the research?
- How will you ensure that your research team, (both local and international as appropriate) share your ethical concerns and approach?
- What means (or methods) will you use to help address the power difference that exists between you and children, and between you and other family and community members?

### 1.7 Who else do you need to consult to involve children in the study?

- Which adults, young people and children, if any, do you need to meet in the family or local community in order to understand the needs and rights of the children involved?
- Whose consent do you need for children to be involved?
- Does the age of the participating child impact on the person or agency from whom you will seek consent?

### 1.8 Have you considered the role of parents (or carers) in the study?

- What are the responsibilities of parents with regard to the research?
- What information do parents need to have to be able to make informed decisions and to support their children in research participation?
- Have the expected benefits of children's participation been clearly explained to the parents?

### 1.9 What community and stakeholder concerns exist about this research?

- Have you consulted all related community and stakeholder groups regarding the involvement/exclusion of children and the nature of the research?
- Are you able to incorporate any community and stakeholder feedback into your research and/or respond to concerns?
- How have you ensured that the community groups and stakeholders understand the research questions and process?
- How have you ensured that there are not unrealistically-raised expectations of the outcomes of the research?

### 1.10 How will children's involvement be resourced?

- What resources (funding, time, staff, equipment etc.) are necessary to undertake the research and are these readily available? If not, is there a plan for how these will be obtained/managed?
- How much time needs to be allocated for obtaining necessary resources in order to undertake the research project ethically?
- What costs are incurred with involving children? (For example, transport, accommodation, food, interpreters, space, materials, communication with children, rewards/payments, staff time and preparation etc.)
- Have the payments associated with children's involvement been factored into the research budget? How will you ensure that the source of funding is consistent with the promotion of children's dignity, rights and well-being?

### 1.11 Ethics Approval

- Does this study require ethics approval? If so, from whom and who determines this?
- How have you engaged with the Ethics Committee / Institutional Research Board?
- After gaining formal ethics approval, how will you ensure that ethical standards are adhered to throughout the research process, by you and your research team?

### 1.12 Are there any risks for you in undertaking this research?

- What risks, if any, are there for you in undertaking the research?
- What will you do to manage these risks?
- What supports are available to you?

## 2. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

### The Children

#### 2.1 Will children be involved in the design of the research?

- What opportunities are there for children to provide input or feedback regarding the research design?
- What strategies will you employ to facilitate this?
- How will you incorporate feedback from children about the study design?

#### 2.2 Is the research methodology including data collection inclusive of all children?

- How will you ensure your research design does not discriminate against particular children?
- How will you ensure that all children, where relevant to do so, have equal opportunity to participate irrespective of their age, gender, ethnicity, disability, literacy level or any other specific characteristics/circumstances?
- How will research methods help identify and gain appropriate access to children?
- How have you ensured that secondary data sources have been ethically collected and analysed?

#### 2.3 Are the research methods appropriate for children?

- Are the key questions easily understood by the children who will be involved?
- Are the questions (particularly in surveys) appropriate for the child's characteristics, including age, and surrounding context?
- How will the research methods facilitate children's engagement with the research?
- Are the methods responsive to the specific needs of children (i.e., adaptable methods for particular situations/needs/ages of children)?

### The Researcher(s)

#### 2.4 Do all staff involved have the requisite skills and expertise to undertake the research?

- Is any additional training or up-skilling required for this particular research study?
- Are all staff mindful of cultural considerations?
- Are all staff respectful of those involved in the research study?
- Are specific policies or protocols required to assist staff (for example, policies relating to different aspects of the research process, child protection, confidentiality, data storage etc.)? If so, what policies or protocols, and who determines they are necessary?
- Are there any design and/or data collection methodology-specific ethical considerations to be aware of? If so, what strategies will you adopt to deal with them?

### 3. DATA COLLECTION

#### The Children

##### 3.1 How will children's participation be supported?

- Will you be able to include children at a time of the day that is suitable for them?
- How much time do you require from children? (Is this reasonable?)
- How will you ensure that children's participation will not conflict with their other responsibilities and commitments (e.g., school work, employment/work, leisure time, religious and cultural festivals etc.?)

##### 3.2 How will children's involvement be recognised and supported financially?

- How will you ensure that children's participation will not conflict with their other responsibilities they have related to their family's economic well-being?
- Will children need financial compensation for their participation (for example, for lost earnings)?
- Will children or parents need any financial reimbursement of costs associated with participation in the research?
- Will there be any appreciation payments for children's participation in the research?
- What form will any payment take (for example, money, food, a gift, educational materials) and who will receive it – the child, parents, community?
- Have you taken the local context into account when deciding about payment?
- How and when will information on payment be disclosed? Will it be disclosed in the consent process, after children have agreed to participate, or at the end of the research?

##### 3.3 How will children's privacy and confidentiality be respected?

- How will you ensure children and their families can and cannot be identified, as needed?
- How will privacy be attended to in the research setting?
- Do you plan to allow parents or persons in authority to be present when research is being conducted with children? Why? What impact may this have on children's involvement in the research or the information they may share?
- How will you respond if parents or others will not allow children to be interviewed on their own?
- How will you respond if the child requests that others be present?
- What will the gender and number of interviewers be in relation to the children being interviewed? Why?
- How will you ensure children (and parents) understand the circumstances under which confidentiality should be breached?
- Are there additional strategies that would enhance research staff's capacity to respect children's privacy and confidentiality? (For example, would developing and implementing explicit protocols for research staff regarding privacy and confidentiality be helpful? Have research staff received training relevant to privacy and confidentiality in research involving children?)
- How will you protect confidentiality if your research includes situations in which you are required to share certain research results with service or clinical teams (for example, to provide services to those with infectious diseases) or government agencies?

##### 3.4 How will concerns about children's safety that arise during the research be attended to?

- What actions will you take in response to a child's disclosure of harm or abuse?
- Who will you need to inform about these actions?
- What are the legal requirements for reporting child abuse in the area the research is taking place?

##### 3.5 Do children require extra support to contribute?

- How will you identify the special needs of individual children?
- How will you respond to these needs?

### 3.6 How will you assess the competence of children to consent?

- How will you ensure that children understand what consent is?
- How will you support children to understand and weigh up any risks?
- How will you ensure that children are able to withdraw without negative consequences?
- How will you ensure that children understand that they are able to withdraw consent at any time without penalty?
- How will you make provision for gaining children's informed consent or allowing their dissent at different stages over long-term projects?

### 3.7 How will you respond to children if they become distressed or upset?

- Do you have the experience and/or skills to respond to children's distress?
- How will you support children to understand and weigh up any risks?
- How will you ensure that children are able to withdraw without negative consequences?
- Have you considered instigating a post-interview check-in by someone who is a known, trusted support, familiar with the child's usual behaviour, and can read the signs and find additional help if needed?
- What supervision or support do you need to have in place for research team members?

### 3.8 How will you ensure your own emotional and physical safety?

- Have you considered the need for debriefing at the conclusion of research procedures? If needed, how will these be established?
- Are colleagues aware of your location, travel plans and expected time of return during fieldwork?
- Are you able to contact your colleagues/supervisor or emergency services should an incident arise where you need help?
- Have you considered the possible ways your safety might be compromised and made contingency plans if necessary?

## 4. ANALYSIS, WRITING AND DISSEMINATION

### The Children

#### 4.1 Are children to be involved in the analysis of data?

- If children will be involved in data analysis, what support will they require?
- How will you ensure the privacy and confidentiality of participants is respected by children involved in the analysis of the research?

#### 4.2 How will the research findings be disseminated to children, other relevant stakeholders and wider audiences?

- How will children hear about the findings of the study?
- • How will you ensure children involved in the study can access, understand and, where appropriate, act on the findings?
- • How will you ensure that feedback on the research findings from children and their communities is incorporated in any follow-up actions?
- How will you ensure children's contributions, and their value in the research, receive due recognition?

#### 4.3 How will you ensure that research findings are disseminated safely?

- How will you ensure that the identities of children, families and communities are not revealed?
- How will you respond if children want to be identified?
- If children have been researchers will their names be included in the published materials, in recognition of their contribution?
- How will the participants be assured of the safe-keeping of confidential information they shared?
- How will you ensure that reporting and dissemination is appropriately managed, particularly in relation to language issues, as well as immediacy and ease of accessibility to children and communities?

### The Researcher(s)

#### 4.4 Will the research make a difference to children?

- • What outcomes do you hope for?
- • What are the considerations to ensure rigorous, transparent analysis of data?
- • What are the considerations to prevent the misuse of findings?
- • What obligation, if any, do you have to promote the consideration and use of research findings in programming, service delivery, staff practices and policy-making? How will you go about doing this?
- What are the key elements of the plan for giving children, community members and stakeholders access to the findings of the research?

#### 4.5 How will you ensure data is returned or safely stored and destroyed?

- Will data be returned to children? If so, how will this be done?
- Have you considered the use of information collected that was additional to that specified in the initial consent process? How will you gain consent to use this?
- How will you ensure that the data is returned with respect for maintaining confidentiality?
- What strategies do you have in place for the safe and secure storage of data?
- When and how will you ensure the secure destruction of all nominal information and data when it no longer needs to be kept?

## BEST PRACTICE REQUIRES THAT YOU:

- Be able to justify why the research is being done and why children or a specific group of children are being included in or excluded from the research.
- Work to ensure that children are not harmed as a consequence of their participation in research from the outset of the project through to its completion.
- Consider, as widely as possible, any potential harms and/or benefits for child participants, their families or wider community groups.
- Employ strategies to minimise distress for children participating in the research.
- Have child protection protocols in place to safeguard children from abusive or incompetent researchers.
- Have an agreed upon plan for responding to child safety concerns.
- Consult locally when planning the research and developing protocols, without jeopardising children's safety or well-being.
- Ensure that support for children, if needed during and after the research process, has been planned for.
- Take measures to ensure that harm is not caused to children, families or communities in the dissemination of the research findings.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

### WHAT GUIDANCE CAN WE DRAW FROM THE UNCRC IN RELATION TO HARMS AND BENEFITS?

- No child should be discriminated against on the basis of their sex, race, religion, abilities, or any other social or political characteristics, in terms of their participation in research (Article 2).
- Researchers, research organizations and governments have a responsibility to do what is best for children and make sure that all children are protected (Article 3).
- Children have the right to protection from research that is exploitative, harms them or is bad for their health, education or development (Articles 6, 19, 32 and 36).
- Researchers have a responsibility to ensure children have access to advice and support if they are adversely impacted by issues raised in the course of the research process (Article 39).
- Research should honour children's right to express their opinions, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other ways. Researchers have a responsibility to listen and take children's views seriously (Articles 12 and 13).
- Being involved in research has a formative value and therefore should help children use and develop their talents and abilities. (Articles 5, 6, 12 and 13).
- All children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind, throughout the research process (Article 19).
- Children are not allowed to be punished in research (Article 37).

## KEY QUESTIONS

### **Does this research need to be done?**

- Will the research contribute **new knowledge**?
- How have you ensured that the information being sought is **not available elsewhere**?
- Is children's participation in the research necessary or **can the information be obtained in other ways** (excluding endorsing adults speaking on behalf of children in preference to children speaking for themselves)?
- **What form** will **children's involvement in the research** take?

### **Do you have the resources necessary to do the research?**

- **What resources** (money, time, staff, equipment etc) are necessary to obtain the best possible **local knowledge** and to undertake the research, and **are these readily available**? If not, **is there a plan** for how these will be obtained/managed?
- **How much time** needs to be allocated for **obtaining necessary resources** in order to undertake the research project **ethically**?

### **How well prepared are you, the researcher, to meet with children?**

- **What do you know** about the children who you want to involve?
- **How will you find out** what you **need to know** about the children and **their lives**?
- Do you have the **necessary skills** (**technical** and **interpersonal**) to involve the children in research? What **experience** do you have of **dialogue with children**? What do you **know** of **child development**?
- What means (or methods) will you use to address the power difference that exists between you and children?
- How will this research be inclusive of all children?
- What steps can be taken to **identify marginalised/hard to reach children** and ensure they are included in the research?
- If it is **not your intention** to include children, **on what basis** will they be excluded and **why**?

### **How will you ensure children are safe?**

- Are there any **identifiable risks** for children?
- Are there **any risks posed** if the **findings from the research** are made **public**?
- What **plans** can be put in place to **reduce risk**?
- Are there children whose **particular circumstances** place them at **high risk**? If yes, who are they and why?
- How will you find out what community and/or professional resources and services are available to children if needed?
- What **actions** will you **need** to take to **respond appropriately** if a child **discloses harm or abuse**?
- **Who** will you need to **inform** about these actions?
- What are the **legal requirements** for **reporting child abuse** in the **area the research is taking place**?
- What **possible stigma** may attach to children if they participate in the research? What will you do about this?
- Do you need to develop and/or implement **safety protocols** or **policies** in your project to **protect children, during and/or following** the research? If so, why, and what protocols or policies are these?
- Have you considered instigating **a post-interview check-in** by someone who is a known, trusted support, **familiar with the child's usual behaviour**, and can **read the signs** and find **additional help** if needed?

### **How will you respond to children if they become distressed or upset?**

- Do you have **the experience** and/or **skills to respond** to **children's distress**?
- What **supervision or support** do you need to have in place for research team members?
- What **arrangements** do you need to make to **support children who become distressed**? And how will you **ensure** that their issue or concern **was attended to**?