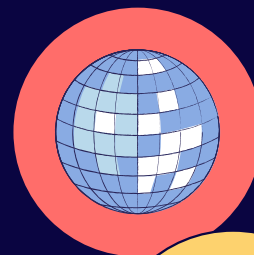


Young Explorers Research Project

BAIRNS HOOSE AYRSHIRE

By Brooke, Haley and Mia



WE ARE THE YOUNG EXPLORERS

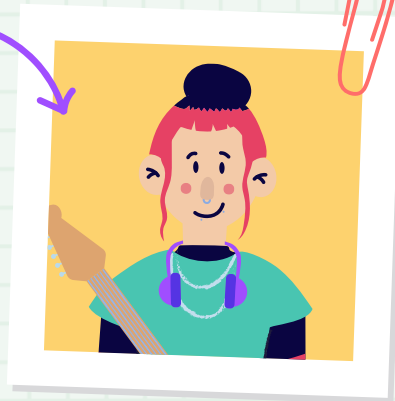


We are a group of young people aged between 12-14 who have taken part in our own research to help with the development of Bairns Hoose in Ayrshire and across Scotland.

HI, I'M BROOKE

I love music and I'm happiest when I'm playing my guitar or drums! I also like to go to Greggs and Taco Bell.

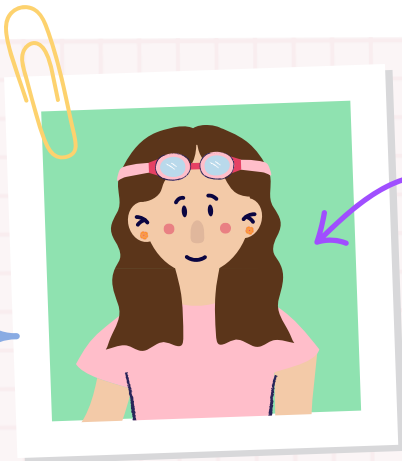
“ Young people's voices need to be heard.”



HELLO! I'M HALEY

I play trumpet and I also love swimming - my favourite stroke is breaststroke.

“ Everyone deserves to be supported.”



HEY, I'M MIA

I love experimenting with my hair and make-up. I always have my phone with me so I can stay in touch with my friends.

“ Young people need safe spaces to recover.”



OUR RIGHTS

We have a right to share our views, opinions and knowledge, so we have taken part in this research to learn more and continue to help try to make change. Every young person has lots of rights, like rights to get the right support., feel safe and to be in decisions that affect us.

WHAT IS BAIRNS HOOSE?

A Bairns Hoose should be a space where children can be heard, respected and supported all in the one place, so they don't need to go to police stations, social work offices, visit doctors or attend court. Children First have listened to many voices of children, young people and families who have experience of the care, justice and protection system and what needs to change. It's important to continue to listen and learn from children, young people and families to try to get it right!

Bairns Hoose rights, advocacy and trauma recovery workers support children and young people when they have been hurt, harmed or been a witness in a crime, this could mean they have been scared or frightened by an adult or peer. Children, young people and their families can be supported by a worker to help them understand things better or make sense of what's happened.

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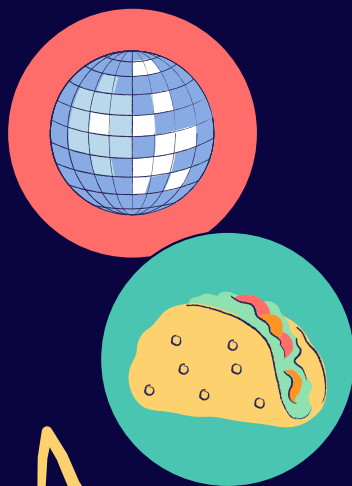


THE IMPACT OF THE SCOTTISH CHILD INTERVIEW MODEL (SCIM) ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE CHILD INTERVIEW TEAM.

BY BROOKE

My focus was on the child interview team and Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) to explore support provided to children and young people before, during and after their interview. As well as understanding what support is offered to the interview team by their managers.

I interviewed the child interview team members, one police officer, one social worker, the interview team manager, a detective inspector of the Public Protection Unit (PPU) Police Scotland and Joint Investigative Interviews national implementation coordinator.



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BROOKE



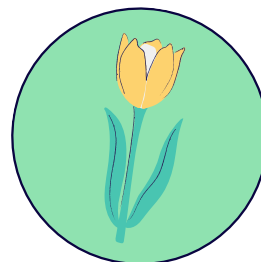
MY FINDINGS

Key themes that I could see through looking at all the interviews I held included:

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COME FIRST

MY LEARNING

Throughout my research everyone I met said supporting children is at the heart of their work. Adults want to make children feel safe and welcome, give them choices (like breaks, fidgets, who interviews them), check in with them, keep things calm and ensure all children feel believed.



THEY SAID...



It's a privilege to hear children's experiences."

Social worker child interview team



We always go at the child's pace."

Police officer child interview team



My job is something that helps people, which helps children... that's the first reason why I love my job, I think I'm helping children...It's always reminding us of what it's all about... it keeps the cycle going."

JII (Joint Investigative Interview) national implementation coordinator



Sometimes it's just getting that child's voice heard."

Detective inspector of PPU (Public Protection Unit) Police Scotland

INTERVIEW SPACES ARE NOT GREAT... AT ALL

MY LEARNING

Everyone said the spaces used for interviews in Ayrshire are noisy, confusing and uncomfortable. The current spaces are shared with other groups and activities, not soundproof, hard to find and not child friendly.



THEY SAID...



We had bagpipes playing next door during the interview."

Social worker child interview team



Kids shouldn't have to walk through big echoey corridors."

Police officer child interview team



It doesn't feel private."

Interview team manager



We need to have a really safe space for the child to come in and have that interview."

Detective inspector of PPU (Public Protection Unit) Police Scotland

PREPARING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE



MY LEARNING

Everyone said that explaining the process is important because it helps reassure the children and young people as well as their parent, carer or support person.

Before any child interview, the interview team will phone and speak with people who are connected to the child and young person going for the interview, they fully explain the process and answer any questions and book a time and date that suits. The interview team have found some challenges with this, like the adults not full understanding the model after it is explained and children may come for their interview not knowing what is happening.

Children don't know what the space looks like ahead of time, this can make them anxious and nervous meaning they might not go through with the interview. The team don't pressure children because they have the choice, but they want to help get children justice and that would mean going ahead with the interview, so they find this hard sometimes.

I learned about challenges the interview team have faced such as very young children can be harder to interview, because they have to follow a model and a process of asking questions that can be tricky for little ones to understand.

They also said working with translators can be a bit of a challenge as it brings another person into the mix, trying to source translators and waiting for their availability can be frustrating for them.



THEY SAID...



Children relax more when they know what is going to happen. We try to find out as much as we can about a child and young person in order to support them when they get to interview so that they can get through the interview as best they can."

Social worker child interview team



We try and create as positive an environment as we can so that sharing their story is as easy and therapeutic as possible."

Interview team manager



We always talk about a child-centred, trauma-informed approach."

Detective inspector of PPU (Public Protection Unit) Police Scotland



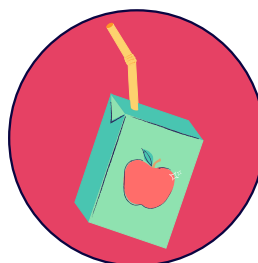
If we don't need to interview the child and we don't need to put the child through trauma, then we won't do it."

Detective inspector of PPU (Public Protection Unit) Police Scotland



When I explained how to make this better it was suggested that improvements could be to make child friendly letters, books, a simple video, or provide photos to explain what will happen and what the interview spaces look like.

I also learned that the model they use is successful, as most children complete their interview and speak to the police officer and social worker, so this might mean that it works. The manager also told me that: "The model itself is really successful... 90% of children will disclose and talk openly, and that tells me something we're doing is good."



SHARED VISION FOR BAIRNS HOOSE



MY LEARNING

Everyone has the same dream. They said it would be nice to have a house like building, quiet rooms with discreet cameras, spaces to play and chill. A place where all children receive the same quality of support from all services within one place (interview, recovery, health and justice). Soundproofing spaces need to be considered because there can be interruptions in some interviews. This will help give the space more privacy and a sense of safety for all children and young people walking through the door knowing they are the only ones within the space.

The bigger dream is to perhaps have a main building with smaller spaces spread across Ayrshire.

THEY SAID...



There's too much red tape. We've been waiting too long."

Police officer child interview team



A warm, cosy, homely place where everything a child needs is under one roof."

Social worker, child interview team



Creating the right environment can change the whole experience."

Interview team manager



Everyone should be getting a really positive experience no matter where they live."

JII (Joint Investigative Interview) national implementation coordinator

WORKING TOGETHER IS IMPORTANT



MY LEARNING

For Bairns Hoose to work, everyone needs to come together from all areas (health, justice, interviews and recovery). This can be tricky as there are so many professionals and services which seems to create a barrier to working together. It sounds like there's different opinions, cultures, views, priorities and miscommunication.

THEY SAID...



We all want the same thing which is better outcomes for children."

Interview team manager



Systems and processes are changed by people. So it comes back to what you would want people to bring to this."

JII (Joint Investigative Interview) national implementation coordinator



In order for this to be a success, we need to build trust and relationships."

Interview team manager



STAFF BEING SUPPORTED

MY LEARNING



The interview team I met seem like they need more support. I learned how hard it is to hear so many interviews. The team seem to find debriefing helpful, so this should continue. They are also offered counselling and peer support.

THEY SAID...



Interviews can be rewarding but emotionally heavy."

Social worker child interview team



The stories stay with you."

Social worker child interview team



Support is there, but it's not always consistent."

Police officer child interview team



A lot of times in my job we focus so much on the victims of crime and we don't actually think about the police officers who are dealing with it and for a long time police officers were kind of neglected, so I feel quite strongly about the aftercare for police officers following incidents."

Detective inspector of PPU (Public Protection Unit) Police Scotland



Try not overload my staff with too many interviews."

Interview team manager



We also encourage and offer breaks when we can."

Detective inspector of PPU (Public Protection Unit) Police Scotland

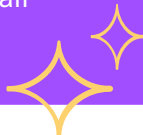




MY CONCLUSION:

From my research and connections with individuals connected to Bairns Hoose. I've learned that everyone is committed to children, but we need friendly spaces to do better child interviews. We need places that are calm, homely and nothing clinical or office like buildings. They should be providing pictures, videos, virtual tours to help children before they go for their interview.

Always offer sensory resources to anyone this helps! Support the staff because they do fab jobs and it will make them stay in their jobs.



MY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- We need to work together and find a space to get it right for children and young people.
- A single space for interviews that is not shared is needed.
- We need a Bairns Hoose.
- Work together, listen to us.
- The interview team should spend time outwith work together three times a year.
- There should be a wellbeing day for all staff to meet and connect together.
- For managers - give your staff support they need so they can support children and young people well.
- Interview team - keep doing your job, you guys are amazing.



EXPLORE AND UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OF BAIRNS HOOSE RECOVERY ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND HOW WORKERS ARE SUPPORTED BY THEIR LINE MANAGERS.

BY HALEY

My focus was on Bairns Hoose recovery, I wanted to explore the trauma recovery support. I also wanted to understand how recovery workers are supported by their line managers and what impact this may have on children and young people.

I interviewed two Bairnshoose rights, advocacy and trauma recovery workers, the service coordinator, assistant director and Chief Executive of Children First.



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HALEY



MY FINDINGS



Key themes that I could see through looking at all the interviews I held included:

THEME 1: RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

MY LEARNING



Relationships matter in recovery for children, young people and staff.

The relationship comes first. If you have trust, then everything else becomes easier. Everyone I interviewed agreed that young people feel safer and more confident when they have trusting, caring and reliable adults around them. Support works best when it's built on real relationships.

One of the Bairns Hoose rights, advocacy and trauma recovery workers spoke about how important it is 'to get alongside young people' and take things at their pace. Another worker said 'being steady and having warm presence helps young people open up' which young people agree with.

Bairns Hoose leaders also agreed and said within Children First their job is to look after their staff so they can be emotionally present for young people. It is really reassuring for children and young people that workers are supported well, because it means when it comes to our connection with them, they will be ready and available.

I asked the Chief Executive what she looks for in her staff at Bairns Hoose, she said: "someone who brings courage, imagination and kindness."

THEME 2: LISTEN TO OUR VOICES

MY LEARNING



Bairns Hoose rights, advocacy and trauma recovery workers use different creative methods to support young people, and this is built on children's hobbies and interests. One of the Bairns Hoose rights advocacy and trauma recovery workers said: "I've used art, drives, cafes, outdoor walks and sensory tools. Creativity helps heal people." This works because young people can share feelings using the tools and activities which will help build them into a stronger person.

Everyone agreed that some young people might need more connections than others, and that's okay. Support can look different depending on what each young person is comfortable with. It's important that young people get to choose what works for them and go at their own pace, which helps them feel more relaxed and in control.

Everyone interviewed felt young people know what works best for them, so the support should be based around what works best for them. Let young people choose what they're comfortable with and need.

THEY SAID...



Six sessions models don't work for everyone."

Bairns hoose rights, advocacy and trauma recovery worker



Walks, car chats, art and other options are more natural, but depends on what the young person needs or wants."

Bairns hoose rights, advocacy and trauma recovery worker



Young people get to choose the pace and how the support may look."

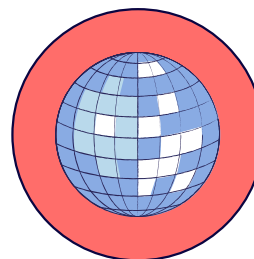
Bairns hoose rights, advocacy and trauma recovery worker



THEME 3: OUR VISION FOR BAIRNS HOOSE

MY LEARNING

When I explored with everyone 'what is a Bairns Hoose?' They all said it should be a beautiful, homely, safe place where young people can choose to go and get support all under one roof.



THEY SAID...

The Children First, Chief Executive described her vision to be created with young people and the assistant director said it's important for the space to feel "non-clinical". Everyone agreed that young people shouldn't need to bounce between buildings and professionals.



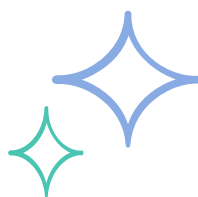
I would love it if you had in Ayrshire a really beautiful Bairns Hoose that you had helped design so that it was designed by young people and that felt like it gave you all that you needed."

Chief Executive, Children First



It should be about giving some of that power back to the young person and what their support looks like."

Bairns hoose rights, advocacy and trauma recovery worker



THEME 4: STAFF SUPPORT IS IMPORTANT



MY LEARNING

The work appears to be emotional for workers so it's important for them to feel supported. The Bairns Hoose coordinator does this by offering 'staff check ins, supervisions and time to reflect and space for team to meet.'

I love swimming and music; it helps me feel better about life. It's important for workers to think about self-care and do things out with work to keep them grounded like swimming, painting or having chats with friends.



THEY SAID...



“ When staff feel supported, they can give better support to you.”
Assistant director, Children First

“ Getting good support from management is really important in this role and important that you have a good relationship with your manager so you can talk that through and do a bit of kind of offloading.”
Bairns Hoose rights, advocacy and trauma recovery worker

“ I think it's my job to make sure that the workers feel safe, they feel supported, they feel like they've got the skills they need, the training and mostly they feel that they've got me behind them supporting them... so that they feel like they're not doing it alone.”
Bairns Hoose Ayrshire coordinator

I also learned through interviewing everyone that managers need to be supported by their managers.

THEY SAID...



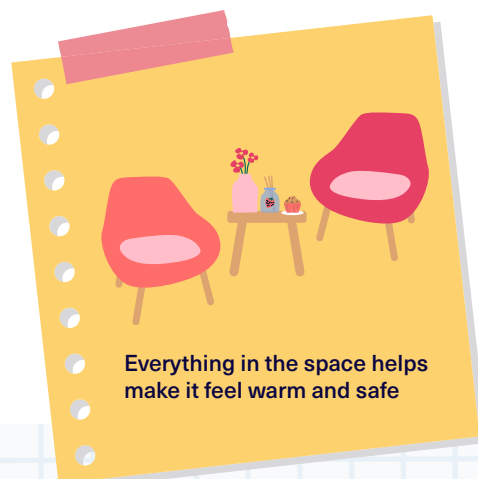
“ The most important part of my job is just being there for the Bairns Hoose coordinator and making sure that if there's anything worrying her... then I'm there for her.”
Assistant director, Children First

“ I like to think that the team know that I'm there for them as well.”
Assistant director, Children First

THEME 5: SPACE MATTERS

MY LEARNING

Everyone who I spoke to agreed that young people feel safer in places that are warm, calm and welcoming. Not clinical or scary. Hallways, lighting, smells, décor and even snacks affect how a space can feel.



THEY SAID...



Children's rights, feedback and experiences shape national policy."
Chief Executive, Children First



Meeting children and young people, listening to what they think is a good idea and then taking that and making the politicians and all the leaders in the country listen and do something about it to make things better."
Chief Executive, Children First



Young people like you shared your stories, they told us what worked and what didn't... and we just spent a long time talking about it, pushing for it, demanding it."
Chief Executive, Children First

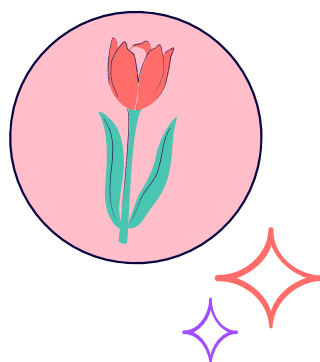


Being a leader in Bairns Hoose... I get to do what's right for children in terms of the right to a less traumatising justice system and sometimes you need to have quite difficult conversations just to try and get our point across... but we need to not give in."
Bairns Hoose Ayrshire coordinator

THEME 6: SPEAKING UP FOR CHILDREN AND TRYING TO MAKE CHANGE

MY LEARNING

Everyone agreed that they need to listen to the children with experiences of systems and that some things need to change. Systems like police and courts need to be less scary for young people.



THEY SAID...



The space should feel like a comfy home and not like an office.”

Assistant director, Children First



In recovery, space really does matter because you need to feel comfortable to be yourself.”

Bairns hoose rights, advocacy and trauma recovery worker



I think that the place that you offer support is hugely important.”

Bairns hoose rights, advocacy and trauma recovery worker



Sometimes it's about going outdoors, sometimes it's about meeting in school, sometimes the family home, sometimes in a kind of neutral environment.”

Bairns hoose rights, advocacy and trauma recovery worker



A space... that felt really safe, warm, comfortable so that when they were talking about things that had happened to them it was made to feel as easy as it can possibly be.”

Chief Executive, Children First

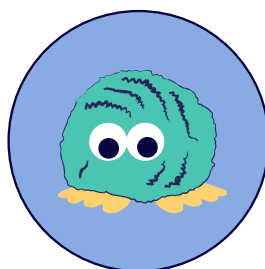
OVERALL, MY THOUGHTS

Young people need trusting relationships, safe spaces and recovery support that fits who we are. The staff work really hard to make sure they can do this in lots of creative and imaginative ways. But they need support too as staff.

Young people know how things felt during certain experiences and processes so should be very much involved in shaping any change.

The vision is to create somewhere in Ayrshire that feels and looks nice and young people can go to get everything they need in one safe building without having to continuously repeat their story.

Listen to this feedback and get us there, to one safe place, one story, one team!



MY RECOMMENDATIONS:

For leaders, people high up, funders, managers and the trauma recovery team...



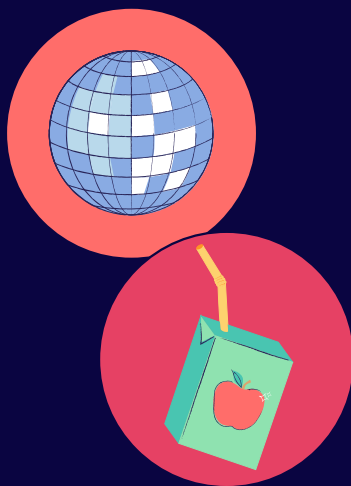
- Continue being flexible in recovery support.
- Continue to do what's already being done for trauma recovery.
- Keep asking people higher up why things are still hurting us.
- Stop saying and do.
- Work together and build friendships with justice and health.
- Always think about children's rights in any decision.
- Make time to get to know us, don't rush it & keep it consistent and clear.
- Continue to let us choose the spaces, time and duration of support.
- Make sure you include the court and health side of Bairns Hoose.
- Workers need to continue being supported by line managers because this will help them feel safe.
- Work with young people to design the spaces.
- Make sure it suits everyone's needs and ages.
- Make it feel calm and colourful.
- Make sure snacks are up to date.
- Make it feel inviting.



THE VISION FOR BAIRNS HOOSE IN AYRSHIRE.

BY MIA

I connected with the senior managers across North, South and East Ayrshire health and social care partnership (HSCP) to explore their roles, perspectives and vision within the development of Bairns Hoose Ayrshire.



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MY RESEARCH PROJECT

I chose to focus on interviewing to senior managers within the three Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs) in North, South and East Ayrshire to explore their roles, perspectives and vision to the development of Bairns Hoose Ayrshire.

MY INTERVIEWS WERE BASED AROUND THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What do you love most about your job?

2. How does your job make you feel?

3. Why are children and young people's voices important in the development of Bairns Hoose?

4. What is your opinion of the current justice system?

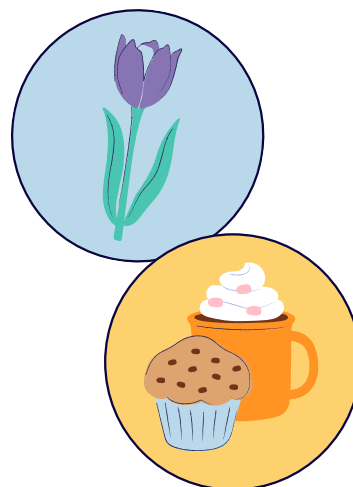
5. How does the current system impact victims and witnesses right now?

6. Is there anything you would change?

7. What is your vision for Bairns Hoose in Ayrshire?

8. Thinking about your role, what is your commitment to Bairns Hoose and how will that get us there?

9. If there's any barriers to get us there, how are you going to overcome them?



MY FINDINGS

Key themes that I could see through looking at all the interviews I held included:

1. OUR VOICES AS CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

MY LEARNING

Senior managers agreed and that children and young people are the experts in their own experiences and Bairns Hoose can't be developed without listening to us. It's important that adults don't do this without hearing from children and young people with experiences, otherwise it won't get done properly.

THEY SAID...



If we don't know the voices and what children and young people are saying that works and what doesn't work then how are we going to get the service and the support in Bairns House right... without children's voice it's a bunch of adults coming up with good ideas and not checking out actually is that what is the most important thing for children and young people."

Senior manager, East Ayrshire HSCP



Young people are the voices of what it's like to experience the service... from the minute they walk through the premises, to undertaking an interview, to getting support and recovery, to how they're feeling afterwards when no one's around."

Senior manager, North Ayrshire HSCP



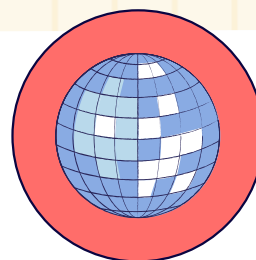
A lot of what we did years ago, we did to people and doing to people doesn't work... we don't know better it's the people who are using the service who knows better."

Senior manager, South Ayrshire HSCP



Adults can't guess or assume what it's like. We need to hear from the young people that are experiencing it in order to mould the service."

Senior manager, North Ayrshire HSCP



2. THE CURRENT JUSTICE SYSTEM IS FAILING US

MY LEARNING

Senior managers said the system is 'too complex, slow and harmful' especially for us as young people and this can really impact us. I learned that now, children and young people are still having to go and appear in courts face to face, feeling anxious or nervous and unsure about what is happening. This might be overwhelming for children and affect them potentially more than the incident. I learned that there is a huge wait and often delays with court processes and this can be even more harmful and triggering in itself. This can slow down their time to recover as it will be hanging over the top of them.

THEY SAID...



If I look at it from a child's point of view, its not child friendly at all. It's probably slower than it ever was, I know of children who are 3 years older than they are from when an incident happened, and we still don't know what's happening. that child is just stuck in the system."

Senior manager, South Ayrshire HSCP



I don't think it works very well especially for children and young people... it takes too long and there's too many questions and too many different things that happen to go through the justice journey."

Senior manager, East Ayrshire HSCP



I don't know that that's always really explained very well for children and young people about what happens next and whether that supports recovery and moving on."

Senior manager, East Ayrshire HSCP



There's lots of different agencies involved, there's not enough resources... since COVID there's been lots of delays."

Senior manager, North Ayrshire HSCP



3. BAIRNS HOOSE AS ONE SAFE PLACE

MY LEARNING

After interviewing all three managers, I learned they see Bairns Hoose as a single space, that's nice, safe and comforting for children and young people. This will help reduce a lot of feelings for us children when having to make use of and visit a Bairns Hoose. I also learned that the vision is for Bairns Hoose to be a space where all rooms come together, so everyone works together to do their best for the children and they get the best support and recovery. We need to start somewhere and one Bairns Hoose would be the best place, however in the future, there should be consideration for smaller safe spaces to reduce any transport stress because Ayrshire is so big.

THEY SAID...



An actual house... one place where all the support that somebody might want to have or the people they might want to talk to is there in one place and they don't need to go anywhere else unless they want to."

Senior manager, East Ayrshire HSCP



A trauma informed, multi agency space where children can go from the point of referral to the outcome."

Senior manager, North Ayrshire HSCP



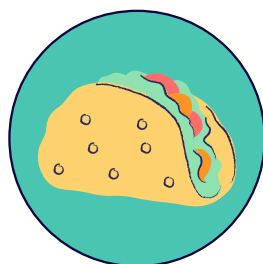
You're not having to retell your story... you're not having to go all about different locations, and the services are coming to the children."

Senior manager, North Ayrshire HSCP



We're probably going to have to look at some sort of hub and spoke model... so you're not put at any disadvantage because of where you live. This supports the idea that Bairns Hoose needs to be accessible, flexible and fair, not just a single building in one town."

Senior manager, South Ayrshire HSCP



4. US AS CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE FEELING SAFE, UNDERSTOOD AND LISTENED TO



MY LEARNING

All leaders agreed that for us to feel safe, understood and listened to it's not just about the actual space, it's about considering how we feel too. We need help to prepare and be supported. This will reassure us, make us feel safe and okay to continue with the process, which means we are one step closer to our recovery. A senior manager in North Ayrshire said she would 'take young people completely out the court system... and link it to Bairns Hoose.'

I learned that there may be class, gender and power inequalities within the justice system and among those who work within it. One leader explained that although some progress has been made, there is still a lot of barriers

THEY SAID...



They're (those working within the justice system) are very middle class, or upper class and they don't understand what poverty is. I'm not convinced it has moved on enough."

Senior manager, South Ayrshire HSCP



It's really important that the people that are around and supporting children through the justice process... have access to recovery and support as well."

Senior manager, North Ayrshire HSCP



Every improvement that we make aims to reduce those negatives and to help young people feel safer and more prepared and more supported."

Senior manager, North Ayrshire HSCP



It's an adult environment... it's scary, it's old, it's cold, it's not the place that you're in the right frame of mind to start talking about what's happened."

Senior manager, North Ayrshire HSCP

I did learn that while everyone shares very similar visions for children and young people there are still barriers to get us there and this can sometimes add pressure, money is a big factor to pay for workers, service and support. I learned there's actually not any long-term commitment, which makes me worried but I feel reassured that there are people doing their jobs to push for it, so I am hopeful. There are lots of people involved with Bairns Hoose which means there are lots of processes and timescales that can make things feel long, there are also no physical spaces in Ayrshire yet, which links to all the barriers. Everything feels like it's for adults, the court and evidence giving process are not child friendly and many spaces feel old fashioned inside. This needs to change.

THEY SAID...



Funding remains the biggest barrier... there is not long term commitment from the government to fund this initiative."

Senior manager, North Ayrshire HSCP



Sometimes there are things that are a bit more difficult in trying to get places and spaces where we want Bairns Hoose to be."

Senior manager, North Ayrshire HSCP



It's going to be extremely expensive if we're going to do it right... and if we're going to do it justice, we need to do it properly rather than just wee piecemeal. Everything in Ayrshire is duplicated three times... and we can get caught up in different governance stuff so what we need to do is work together to break down all the barriers... and keep the communication going."

Senior manager, South Ayrshire HSCP

MY RECOMMENDATIONS:



- Continue to make sure senior managers prioritise improving children, young people and their family's experience of the justice system.
- Workout how to overcome system pressures.
- Get funding or work together to fund Bairns Hoose and smaller hub and spoke spaces.
- Make sure our voices shape Bairns Hoose Ayrshire.
- Make things simpler between the three Ayrshires.
- Make things happen quicker together across all three Ayrshires.
- Change interview equipment to fixed ones so that interviews are better.
- Children not having to go to court as much.
- Challenge the Scottish Government about their commitment.

To all the professionals who took the time out of their day to meet with us. Thank you so much for helping us in the research project. Your feedback has been so helpful and we have learned so much from you all. Hopefully it will help make things better for children and young people in the future.

From Haley, Brooke and Mia