

**FOLLOWING
YOUNG
FATHERS
FURTHER**

A Future Leaders Fellowship Study

Report No. 1

CO-CREATING FATHER-INCLUSIVE PRACTICE AND RESEARCH:

**FINDINGS AND INNOVATIONS FROM FOLLOWING
YOUNG FATHERS FURTHER**

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FOREWORD

In October 2018, just two weeks before giving birth to my youngest child, I submitted one of the most exciting and ambitious research proposals of my career; a proposal for a Future Leaders Fellowship. Future Leaders Fellowships are a prestigious research and innovation scheme funded by UK Research & Innovation. They offer substantial investment in budding scientists and social scientists to deliver on a vision for the benefit of society, through their development as research leaders in a key area of expertise. They are also unique as funding schemes in providing a longer-term space through which to address complex societal issues and challenges. My ambition was to develop as an acknowledged leader and expert in fatherhood research and to build a feminist-informed agenda centred around the promotion of the value of father engagement and the instigation of a more father-inclusive practice and policy environment.

The prioritisation of cross disciplinary and sector collaborations and innovation in the scheme also aligned perfectly with these ambitions, which I had come to learn were shared with professionals nationally who are deeply committed to improving recognition of, and support for, father engagement as a key societal imperative. Indeed, the initial idea for the fellowship grew out of previous work conducted in Leeds (Tarrant and Neale, 2017), which sparked new conversations with professionals in Grimsby. There was a local commitment to exploring whether and how they could embed father-inclusive principles through place-based work, in a way that would support fathers in the town regardless of their identities, and their socio-economic and personal circumstances. Through the fellowship we committed to collaborate to test and instigate a new model of the Young Dads Collective in Grimsby, an effective model of good practice that trains young fathers to educate professionals about the importance of father-inclusion through *telling* them about their parenting journeys and support needs.

To extend the value of the research, I proposed to develop the learning from Following Young Fathers, a study that I had become more closely connected with and that was unique globally, as the first qualitative longitudinal study of young fatherhood. To increase the reach of Following Young Fathers, we committed to following up with some of the young fathers who had participated in that study to capture their longer-term parenting experiences and trajectories. We also sought to compare the experiences of young fathers in the UK with young fathers in Sweden, comparing the extent to which the welfare and family policy systems in the two countries influence young fathers' experiences and their abilities to be there for their children. We have since published some of our findings and conclusions (Andreasson et al. 2022; Tarrant et al. 2022).

Based on my ongoing conversations with multi-agency professionals, with marginalised and impoverished fathers, and my analyses of existing qualitative data about young fathers through the Following Young Fathers study, I was convinced of the need for more research about *how* we better support father involvement and engagement, not only for the benefit of men, but also for women, for children and for society as a whole. I was also convinced that this could not be the work of one person alone; but of a coalition of individuals, communities, researchers, professionals and policymakers, perhaps with different perspectives, but with a shared vision and commitment to understanding father-inclusion and to seeing dads in a different way.

The question I had from the outset of the Following Young Fathers Further study was *how*? How do we create the conditions that enable fathers in all their diversity to 'be there' for their children and in the way they want to be? Who do we need on board to promote this vision? What concepts and theories do we need to develop to support this work? What works already and how can this be replicated? and finally; What methods and mechanisms need to be in place to ensure that this happens?

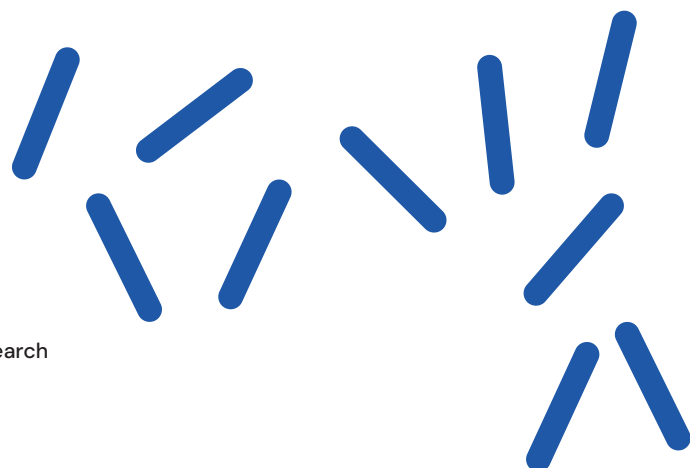
These questions have formed the basis of the Fellowship and have driven our vision for collaborating with champions for fathers to advocate for, and evidence, the value of a more father-inclusive society that works more effectively for all fathers and their families. These questions and this vision have driven much the work of the Following Young Fathers Further team, both planned and serendipitous, since January 2020 when we embarked on this hugely ambitious piece of work. They also drive the recently established Centre for Innovation in Fatherhood and Family Research, based at the University of Lincoln under my leadership. We welcome new members, both in academia and beyond, to continue to build towards a shared vision for a father-inclusive, gender equal society.

This report series provides just a sliver of insight into the work of the past four years but is a culmination of our journey *so far*. We have plans to develop further outputs from the study, supported by an additional three years of funding that will extend our work again to January 2027. Our hopes are to deliver on, and advance our agenda for a father-inclusive society by expanding our multi-disciplinary networks, engaging in continued advocacy and practice training and development, working with others to establish a more cohesive and universal policy commitment to involved fathers, and doing so with and for the very people this affects the most; men who are fathers now and men who will become fathers in the future.



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FOLLOWING YOUNG FATHERS FURTHER

Funded via the prestigious UK Research & Innovation Future Leaders Fellowship scheme (grant number: MR/S031723/1), the Following Young Fathers Further (<https://followingyoungfathersfurther.org/>) research programme and its component studies (see Figure 1.1) represent the largest and most extended longitudinal study globally to capture the dynamics and complexities of the parenting journeys and support needs of young fathers, aged 25 and under.

A total of £1.7 million in investment has been secured from UK Research and Innovation under the leadership of Professor Anna Tarrant since January 2020, supporting the work to continue until January 2027. The final three years of funding will facilitate the establishment and growth of a new research and enterprise centre at the University of Lincoln called the 'Centre for Innovation in Fatherhood and Family Research' (CIFFR), which will provide research, training, consultancy, and evaluation around father-inclusion and welfare support for families as key thematic areas.

Foundational to the growth of this new Centre, the first four years of the Following Young Fathers Further study, in which we report on in this series of reports, has invested in developing an evidence base around what matters to young

fathers and what they need to support them to be there for their children. From the outset, the study had specific aims centred around increasing understanding about the way society constructs and responds to young fathers in national and international, comparative contexts. To achieve this broad aim, the study has contributed a unique extended, longitudinal, and international evidence base comprising evidence generated with a cohort of 42 young fathers, of whom 10 are based in Sweden and 32 are UK based.

This evidence base has been built alongside the instigation of evidenced practice and policy solutions designed to promote gender equality and the citizenship of young men who are fathers. This has involved research and engagement with national mainstream and specialist organisations that are pioneering support for young fathers. As a qualitative longitudinal impact study that has advanced co-creation methodology for the purposes of social innovation, the study has been designed to ensure that social change remains at the heart of the study objectives and design. As we demonstrate in this series of reports, Following Young Fathers Further is uniquely facilitating change in real time by supporting and charting the building of new services and interventions in a way that responds directly to the existing evidence base, which we briefly outline next.

FIGURE 1.1: THE FOLLOWING YOUNG FATHERS FURTHER RESEARCH PROGRAMME

The Following Young Fathers Further research programme comprises five linked and cumulative studies. These are as follows:

- *Following Young Fathers (FYF)* (Economic and Social Research Council, Neale and Lau Clayton; two-phase study, 2010–2012 (Young Lives and Times); 2012–2015).
 - Established the first dynamic qualitative longitudinal evidence base about young fathers, capturing the lives and support needs of young dads over time,
- *Responding to Young Dads in a Different Way (RYD)* Impact Initiative (University of Leeds, Tarrant and Neale, 2016–17);
 - Involved a collaboration with practitioners to test and evaluate novel ways of working with/supporting young dads (Tarrant and Neale, 2017ab),
- *Men, Poverty and Lifetimes of Care (MPLC)*, involving a secondary analysis of data from the FYF study (Leverhulme, Tarrant, 2014–18).
 - Involved a secondary analysis of a sub-sample of data from Following Young Fathers generated with young fathers in low-income families (Tarrant, 2018; 2021),
- *Housing Young Parents* (ESRC, academic-led studentship, conducted by Linzi Ladlow, 2014–17) (Ladlow, 2021):
 - Explores the housing journeys and needs of young fathers and mothers.
- *Following Young Fathers Further (FYFF)*, UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship, Tarrant et al. 2020–2027),
 - The most recent study at the time of writing and reported on in this series of reports.



RESPONDING TO THE EXISTING EVIDENCE BASE: SOME CONTEXT

Existing research about young fathers confirms that this is a diverse population of young men, albeit one where there is an increased likelihood of experiencing any number of disadvantages across their parenting journeys (see Report 2; Neale and Tarrant, 2024 for a full account). Key challenges, which may be both antecedents to young parenthood and experienced beyond their early transition into parenthood, may include any combination of poverty; limited support in education, training or employment; unstable homes; volatile family backgrounds; periods in care; mental health issues; experiences of offending; and domestic violence (as both victims and perpetrators). These young men are also likely to have a range of associated health and social care support needs across their parenting journeys and are often dependents themselves when they enter parenthood (Neale et al. 2015).

The politics of austerity defining the last decade have done little to alleviate the poverty and inequalities that many young families now face. If anything, the contextual conditions in which they are parenting have worsened, not least since the COVID-19 pandemic and cost-of-living crisis (Garthwaite et al. 2022; Tarrant et al. 2020ab). The vilification of low-income and vulnerable families, promulgated through the discourses of some politicians and public commentators, has meant that young parents continue to be constructed as a 'social problem' (Duncan, 2007; Neale and Tarrant, 2024) and considered largely responsible for their own marginalisation. This vilification has intensified despite the generation of increasingly nuanced evidence, and counter arguments, built on the perspectives of young fathers themselves about their lives, parenting journeys and support needs (see Report 2 for a review and Neale and Tarrant, 2024).

Young fathers are often readily attributed blame for the marginalisation and disadvantages they experience and for the complex and interconnected challenges they may navigate to develop and sustain a parenting role and identity. A shift in attention to the structural processes that shape their trajectories and parenting journeys suggests instead that there is value in understanding the systemic and socio-economic processes that shape young fathers' trajectories, as well as the important role of practice and policy processes in supporting young fathers to be there for their children and to remain involved in their family lives in positive ways over time (Tarrant, 2023; Neale and Tarrant, 2024).

Herein lies a challenge. Existing research confirms that numerous structural, organisational, and cultural influences serve to reinforce the marginalisation young fathers experience (see Report 3). Davies (2016: 317) argues that the 'configuration, funding and delivery of services can inhibit young fathers' use of them'. As she notes, the sustainability of services, which is crucial to the time-intensive process of engaging young fathers, is contingent on sustained funding sources. Somewhat perversely, under the politics of austerity, there have been continued cuts to national and local funding streams and access to welfare has become increasingly conditional on securing employment for many families (Tarrant, 2021).

Each of these influences, hamper the engagements of young fathers with professionals in professional settings, including maternity, child, and family support services, with potential to reinforce negative pervasive assumptions about young fathers. The assumption held by some professionals that fathers are 'hard-to-reach', often translate into practices of surveillance, an approach underscored by an ethos of 'risk' or sidelining, that renders men invisible and contributes to their exclusion from dominant expectations of 'engaged fatherhood' (Neale and Davies, 2015; Neale and Tarrant, 2024). This occurs to the detriment of families and despite the proven societal and wide-ranging benefits of men's involvement in caregiving for children, mothers, and fathers (Panter-Brick et al. 2014; Bateson et al. 2015 for some examples of these benefits).

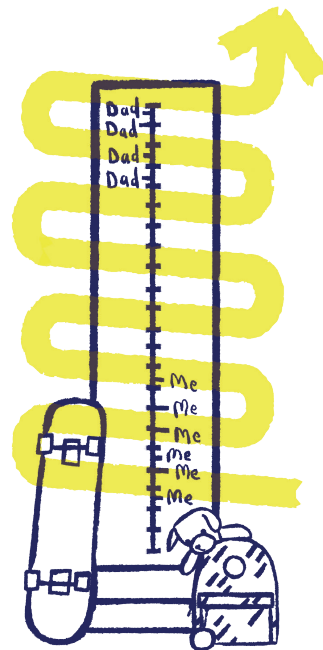
As Neale and Davies (2015) are careful to note, these practices occur against a backdrop where knowledge and evidence about the varied factors that shape the lives of marginalised young men and their families over time are not always readily accessible or mobilised. Research with multi-agency professionals demonstrates that they express long-held concerns about constraints on their abilities to promote and implement father-inclusive practice, with limited opportunities to shape organisational cultures from within (Neale and Davies, 2015). Furthermore, there are few possibilities for young fathers to influence the policies and service provisions that ought to serve them (Tarrant, 2023).

The complementary evolution of growing interest and awareness about young fathers in scholarship and research, alongside increasing professional imperatives to embed father engagement and inclusion more effectively in service contexts, was foundational to the development of the Following Young Fathers Further study and its research and innovation agenda.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND STUDY DRIVERS

The Following Young Fathers Further study was designed to build new dynamic evidence about young fatherhood. This has been achieved via a four-strand programme, outlined later. The data, findings, analyses and methodological strategies from the study have been produced to address the following research questions:

- 1 How do the multiple disadvantages faced by marginalised young fathers, impact on their parenting trajectories and longer-term outcomes and aspirations?
- 2 How are young fathers' experiences shaped within a shifting climate of policy and professional practice and evolving ideologies of engaged fatherhood?
- 3 What are the benefits and key challenges of initiating supportive, client centred models of intervention in the UK and what might be learnt across comparative, international contexts?



In answering these questions, the study has produced a unique evidence base about the shifting landscape of family, parenting and youth practice and policy and its impact on the lives of young fathers. In particular, the study has progressed both participatory and qualitative longitudinal methodologies in directions that few studies in the UK have yet pursued. This includes;

- 1 Employing a constellation of creative and/or participatory qualitative methods with young fathers to produce a rich and in-depth picture of their lives and support needs.
- 2 Advancing co-creation methods for navigating policy and practice processes through research, by creating and facilitating change as an integral part of the research process so that research itself becomes an agent of change; and
- 3 Progressing methodologies for comparative qualitative longitudinal (QL) research by exploring the complex links between time and place.

The core strands of the study are outlined in brief next, as context to the innovations produced through the study, and as an overview of the arguments and contributions we make across this series.

CORE STRANDS AND INNOVATIONS IN YOUNG FATHERHOOD RESEARCH

Strand One: An extended and expanded QL tracking study of the dynamics of young fathers' lives and support needs in the UK

The activities comprising this strand of the research have contributed extended insights into the parenting journeys and support needs of young fathers, developing the longitudinal reach of the Following Young Fathers baseline study, as well as two of the linked studies (see Figure 1.1), *Responding to Young Fathers in a Different Way* (Tarrant and Neale, 2016–17) and *Housing Young Parents* (Ladlow, 2021). For this strand, we recruited a sample of eleven young fathers who had variously participated in these earlier studies. This has enabled the capture of the dynamics of the lives of these young men over a much longer period.

As we elaborate in Report 4, these participants were ethically recruited from the outset of the study to capture where those young men are now, to explore whether they have maintained a role in their children's lives, and what factors have shaped the experiences and practices of those who both have and have not sustained a parental role. In some cases, we have generated over a decade worth of data with each participant, following their parenting journeys far beyond their earlier transition to new parenthood. Some of these young men are now in their 30s and have children who are aged 10 and older.

The biographies of these young men have also been captured in context of the socio-economic and political changes described in the previous section, a period defined by a rapidly shifting climate of policy and professional practice and evolving ideologies of engaged fatherhood (see Report 4).

Strand Two: Policy issues and practice transformation: co-creating the Grimsby Dad Collective

Our previous research emphasized the transformative power of developing new theoretical models that challenge established ways of working in practice and professional settings (Tarrant and Neale, 2017). Indeed, it is only by promoting engaged fathering and challenging stigmatising narratives about young fathers that more effective support for young fathers can be developed. The Young Dads Collective model, originally established by Coram Family and Childcare in London, did just this, offering an innovative solution by training young fathers as 'experts by experience' who are able to articulate their own capabilities and needs to an audience of practitioners and professionals from across the health, education, and social care landscape (Colfer et al. 2015; Tarrant and Neale, 2017). Our early analysis also confirms that the model has potential to tackle social isolation and offer routes for young men's wider social and economic participation.

Building on expertise acquired during previous research (Tarrant and Neale, 2017), Strand 2 assumed a dynamic view of policymaking and support practices for young fathers, exploring how research and practice innovation

can be shaped through co-creation and sustained through the longitudinal frame of the study. Co-creation methodology, which is underpinned by an ethos of participation and innovation, has been employed to explore how effective practices of support offered by this existing support initiative (the 'Young Dads Collective', or YDC) could be adapted to Grimsby, a coastal English town in the East Midlands (see Tarrant, 2023). Practice partners from the third sector in Grimsby, including YMCA Humber and Together for Childhood (NSPCC), identified work with young fathers as a priority in this locality and from the outset of the study have demonstrated their commitment to implementing the new Grimsby hub collaboratively as a new consortium.

To instigate, what we later called, the Grimsby Dads Collective in response to a local consultation, we worked in partnership with national and local practice partners from the third sector and local government to create a new father-inclusive offer. As well as establishing the model as a collaboration, we conducted a process evaluation with the core partners, which has served the dual purpose of facilitating an iteratively refined process, that has directly acknowledged the expertise of young fathers and frontline practitioners, while simultaneously supporting us to track developments in innovative forms of good practice that respond directly to key practice policy priorities.

We present early analyses and learning about the process of instigating the Grimsby Dads Collective in Report 5 to demonstrate the value of working collaboratively and in partnership to develop a place-based model that is tailored to local needs and responses and capable of encouraging localised, place-based father-inclusive practices and approaches that are also prompting wider systems change in practice and policy.

Further details about the learning from this unique, co-created social intervention are provided in Report 5.

Strand Three: An international, comparative study of young fatherhood in Sweden and the UK

Strand 3 contributed another methodological innovation in young fatherhood research as the first international comparative study using a qualitative longitudinal methodology. With international academic partners Professors Thomas Johansson (University of Gothenberg) and Jesper Andreasson (Linnaeus University), a cohort of ten young fathers was interviewed in Sweden. Thus, this strand enabled a much clearer picture to emerge about the impact of different cultures of understanding and expectations on young fathers, and how varied professional responses shape their experiences, their orientation to fatherhood and their capacity to sustain positive relationships with their families.

As a Nordic country, Sweden was considered an analytically useful case for this early form of comparative QL research, enabling exploration of some of the important similarities to the UK, but also distinct differences in policy approaches to young fatherhood. In the Nordic states, young fathers continue to be portrayed as a high-risk group (Johansson and Hammarén, 2014), although they are not regarded

as a social problem in quite the same way that they are in the UK and US.

Welfare regimes in Nordic states are very different to the UK and US. Across all internationally available indicators including citizens' welfare, economic sustainability, politico-administrative performance, and social cohesion, they exemplify success. Gender equality in parenthood is also already embedded in state institutions and everyday practices (Eydal and Rostgaard, 2018); welfare conditionality is applied in a modified form and; supportive, client-centred models of intervention are extensively applied (e.g. Andersen et al. 2018). Like the UK however, Nordic welfare models and institutions are not static and must continually adapt to tackle key global challenges.

Via our analyses of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and on young fathers' commitments to engaged fatherhood in both countries, our emerging findings interrogate how welfare contexts and family policy shape young fathers' views and experiences of parenthood. Our work has identified differences in public constructions of young fatherhood, albeit with distinct shared commitments among young men in both the UK and Sweden to being there for their children and investments in caring and nurturing fatherhoods. Despite notable commitments to engaged fatherhood among young fathers in both countries, we have observed that differences in welfare and parental leave systems between the two countries have a clear influence on the extent to which the young men in the respective countries can fulfil their parental commitments.

While unanticipated at the outset of the study, we also captured the varying responses of the Swedish and UK governments to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impacts of lockdown policies on young fatherhood. Our comparative analyses of the narratives of young fathers revealed heightened precarity in young fathers' transitions to and through fatherhood, especially in the UK. This precarity was linked to restrictions on the provision of financial and emotional support for young fathers, as well as rapid changes that affected their education and employment trajectories and placed constraints on their relational networks. Analyses of these data have been peer reviewed and published but significantly reveal the significance of supportive, family-based policies and welfare support in supporting young parent families to flourish and for promoting gender equality among young fathers.

Further detail is provided in Report 7.

Other references:

Andreasson, J., Tarrant, A., Johansson, T. and Ladlow, L. (2023) Perceptions of gender equality and engaged fatherhood among young fathers: parenthood and the welfare state in Sweden and the UK, *Families, Relationships and Societies*, 12 (3): 323-340.

Tarrant, A., Ladlow, L., Johansson, T., Andreasson, J and Way,

L. (2022) The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown policies on young fathers: Comparative insights from the UK and Sweden, *Social Policy and Society*, 1-11.

Strand Four: Co-creating father-inclusive practice with young fathers in the North East

Our fourth strand of work was not planned from the outset of the study but built incrementally as a productive partnership with the North East Young Dads and Lads (NEYDL). In mid-2020, in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, NEYDL's CEO Kevin Stoodley featured on BBC News discussing their National Lottery funded teen dad support project. We contacted Kevin to explore possibilities for research with some of their young father beneficiaries through the pandemic. This enabled us to capture the parenting journeys and support needs of young fathers through the crisis (see Tarrant et al. 2020ab) and to explore how services who had a remit to support fathers were pivoting their support offers in the context of remote, digital engagement (Tarrant et al. 2022).

As this partnership has evolved since then, we have secured additional funding to train and support beneficiaries of NEYDL to conduct peer research (e.g. Diverse Dads) and to co-create content for the charity's pioneering new digital, e-learning programme [DigiDAD](#). We are now working with NEYDL to nurture a new young father led advocacy group called the AmbassaDADS. This work offers young father beneficiaries, tangible pathways for growth and progression, not simply as dads but also as advocates for father-inclusive work and approaches. FYFF study Director Anna Tarrant has also recently been appointed the Chair of Trustees for the charity and is dedicated to supporting the pioneering father-inclusion aims and activities of the organisation.

These research and advocacy activities are discussed in more detail in Report 6.

Other references:

Tarrant, A., Way, L. and Ladlow, L. (2021) Briefing Paper Three: Supporting at a distance: the challenges and opportunities of supporting young fathers through the COVID-19 pandemic, <https://fyff.co.uk/files/9506ab04c02ddda65965f4a99034dce6e0af5405.pdf>

Tarrant, A., Way, L. and Ladlow, L. (2022) 'The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on young fathers and the services that support them', in: K. Garthwaite, R. Patrick, M. Power, A. Tarrant and R. Warnock (eds.) *COVID-19 Collaborations: Researching Poverty and Low-Income Family Life during the Pandemic*, Bristol: Policy Pres, pp. 135-148.





IMPACT AND TRANSFORMATION: TOWARDS THE SOCIAL PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG FATHERS AND FATHER-INCLUSION

Through these core strands of work, the Following Young Fathers Further study has laid the groundwork for an ambitious agenda for promoting new, positive visions of young fatherhood, involving young fathers and professionals as a key part of the solution. This has been achieved by:

- 1** Consolidating the first extended international and longitudinal evidence base with young fathers and professionals (Andreasson et al. 2023; Tarrant et al. 2022) and
- 2** Employing co-creation methodology to uniquely facilitate the co-operative production of knowledge about father-inclusive and gender transformative practice (Tarrant, 2023).

The multidisciplinary, international, and participatory nature of Following Young Fathers Further has facilitated new and productive relational dialogues across multiple disciplines, sectors, and academic contexts around the shared goal of addressing an otherwise complex, yet currently undefined, concept of father-inclusion. Based on the evidence and methodological strategies that we have refined since January 2020 it is our contention that father-inclusion offers a valuable and more effective framework for embedding 'what works' in terms of support for fathers across the health and social care landscape. As an ideology and an ethos, supported by mechanisms for change and transformation, there is great, yet unrealised potential nationally and internationally to increase young men's opportunities to be positively engaged in their children's lives and to fulfil their social and economic aspirations.

We return to our arguments for promoting father-inclusion in policy and practice, as part of an empirically driven agenda and framework, in Report 8.

LIST OF REPORTS IN THIS SERIES

To mark the end of the first four years of this seven-year programme of research, we have produced this suite of reports to offer an important counter narrative and challenge to the stereotypes, misconceptions and marginalisations that are experienced by young fathers. Opposing the deficit narratives that so readily accrue to young fathers, the findings and innovation process in the Following Young Fathers Further study are simultaneously underpinning change and transformation in fundamental societal perceptions around the role of young fathers in raising children.

Report 2: Theorising young fatherhood: the 'social problems' and 'social engagement' frameworks

An international review of literature about young fathers to date based on the forthcoming book by Neale and Tarrant (2024). This report distinguishes between orthodox social problem and more recent social engagement frameworks about young fatherhood, advocating for a social engagement approach that underpins more caring, compassionate and father-inclusive approaches in practice and policy.

Report 3: Defining and becoming father-Inclusive: an empirically driven agenda

Tying together a currently disparate literature about father-inclusion, this report reveals a concept that is far from settled, under-theorised and subject to multiple interpretations. Nevertheless, on the strength of the evidence available, we argue that father-inclusion has great potential as an ethos, a strengths-based approach to practice, a driver for service design, and as an alternative policy direction that provides the scaffolding for transformation and change for fathers and their families.

Report 4: Doing father-inclusive research over time: the value of sustained and purposeful engagement by young fathers qualitative longitudinal research

Presenting evidence generated with a select group of eleven young fathers who have variously participated across the decade long programme of qualitative longitudinal research that comprises the Following Young Fathers Further programme, this report argues that the study itself has become an important space for father-inclusion. An exploration of young fathers' motivations to remain engaged with the research, demonstrate that there are numerous social and emotion dimensions that underpin their engagement and participation.

Report 5: Co-creating a father-inclusive practice intervention: insights for policy and practice from the process of instigating the Grimsby Dads Collective

This report presents learning from one of the core innovations of the Following Young Fathers Further study; the Grimsby Dads Collective. The Grimsby Dads Collective is a father-inclusive model of good practice that has been co-created in Grimsby to increase the visibility of fathers in the area for the purposes of providing them with a space of support. Outlining the impacts that the process of co-creation has had, we demonstrate the value of establishing a father-inclusive support offer, not just for young fathers but for the purposes of affecting social change at the level of practice and policy too.

Report 6: Co-creating father-inclusive practice: the innovative and specialist support of the North East young dads and lads

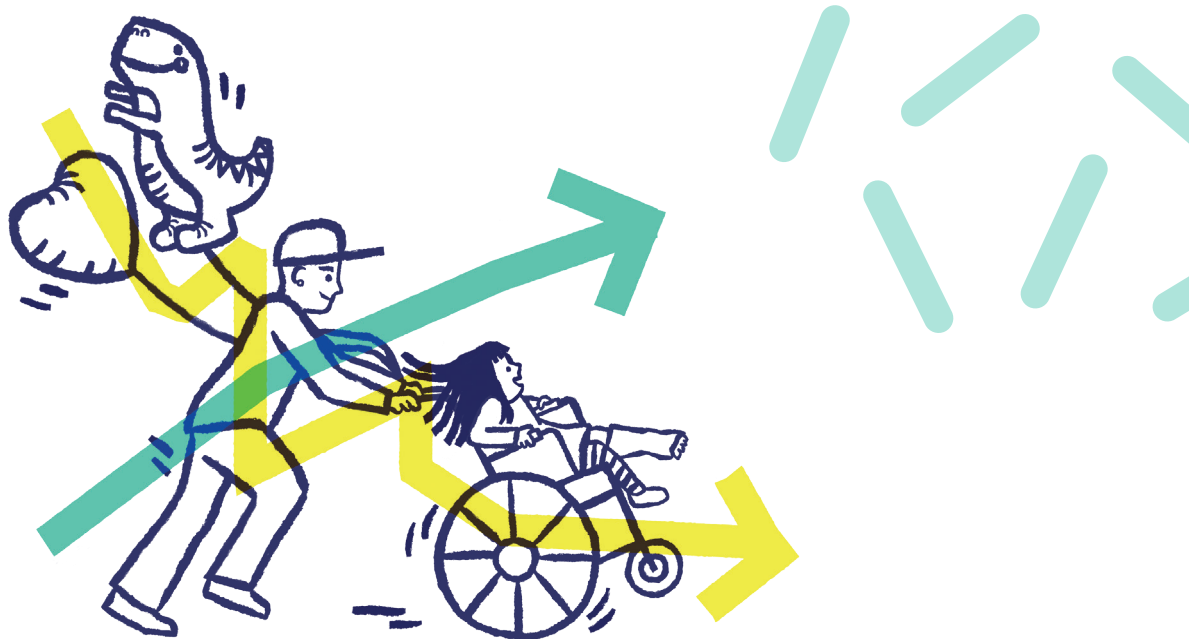
This report illustrates the creative ways that a pioneering specialist support organisation for young fathers, called the North East Young Dads and Lads in Gateshead, is uniquely advancing creating father-inclusive practice and research approaches. We outline how the organisation is supporting young father beneficiaries to become mentors, advocates, and peer researchers, who are leading new conversations that challenge negative narratives about young fathers.

Report 7: Father-inclusion and welfare systems in the UK and Sweden: learning from an international comparative study of young fatherhood

Presenting analyses of interviews with concurrent cohorts of young fathers in the UK and Sweden, this report demonstrates the importance of family policy and welfare systems in shaping the parenting journeys and support needs of young fathers. We argue that in both the UK and Sweden, there is evidence of father commitment and a strong desire to 'be there' for their children. However, welfare systems operate differently, with Sweden enabling greater opportunities for father-inclusion for men than for those in the UK.

Report 8: Conclusion: learning from co-creating father-inclusive practice and research with young fathers and multi-agency professionals

This concluding report makes the case for a new comprehensive social participation framework in thinking about the engagement of young fathers, as well as the value of instigating ecosystemic change, driven by a collective perspective on father-inclusion.



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