

Practice guide

Family Help and Children's Social Care

Family Hubs - Hub2U, Cumberland

Background, purpose and rationale

Hub2U is a mobile extension of Cumberland Council's Family Hub initiative, designed to bring essential services directly to communities that are underserved or geographically remote. The service is particularly focused on areas where young people have historically faced challenges in accessing support or where targeted provision is needed.

The initiative has been made possible through generous contributions from local organisations. Stagecoach donated and refitted the bus, transforming it into a fully functional Family Hub on wheels. Additional funding and design support were provided by Sellafield's social impact programme, the Decommissioning Delivery Partnership (DDP), and the Copeland Community Fund. Hub2U also plays a vital role in strengthening relationships between young people and professionals, fostering voluntary engagement and trust. It supports Cumberland Council and its partners in gaining deeper insights into the lived experiences of young people, thereby improving the accuracy and effectiveness of interventions. Furthermore, it enhances the partnership's understanding of local needs, contributing to better outcomes for children, young people, and families across the region.

What we did to improve children's outcomes

Delivered in the form of a specially adapted bus, Hub2U operates in partnership with a range of local agencies, mirroring the collaborative approach of the static Family Hubs. Its primary aim is to make support more accessible by removing barriers such as transport, stigma, language, and scheduling. The concept was co-produced with children and young people in Cumberland, who also named the initiative. Hub2U serves as a visible and recognisable point of contact for families, offering information, support, and engagement opportunities. By travelling across the Cumberland area, the bus enables local services to reach children, young people, and families in their own communities, including schools, parks, and community centres. This outreach model allows for both daytime and evening engagement. It delivers targeted prevention programmes and one-to-one interventions, addressing issues such as emotional well-being, healthy relationships, online safety, cyberbullying, and substance use.

Hub2U linked with schools and attended events including sports day to engage with children, young people and families. Multi-agency delivery, partners who have attended Hub2U sessions include:

- Sexual and Reproductive Health Services NHS
- Cumberland Growing Healthy
- Together We
- Always Another Way
- Citizen's Advice Bureau
- CADAS
- Inspira

- Shackles-Off (Youth Project Millom / Seascale)
- Distington Community Youth Project
- SENDIASS
- SEND Youth Project
- Always Another Way

What was the impact?

Improved equality in access: Hub2U Mobile Hub has served families who are less likely to access fixed services including those facing transport, language, stigma, or digital exclusion barriers. Hub2U has supported Community Cohesion supported peer networks and supporting to reduce isolation. We are in the early stages of delivery, so outcomes are still building however, to date we have:

- Increased our reach to unique families and children, especially in previously underserved or hard-to-reach areas through
- Evening sessions – these have been delivered in 4 areas engaging a total of 354 Children and Young People, 48 Parents/Carers.
- School sessions – engaging with 189 Children and Young People, 158 Parents/Carers.
- We have received positive feedback on accessibility, location appeal, and how the mobile Hub is perceived versus traditional Hub settings. By taking the offer to the communities, we have captured feedback from children, young people and families to help understand barriers and needs.
- Promoted the uptake of key services like baby groups in static Family Hubs.

One parent/carer was supported to book their baby onto Baby Massage classes. The parent/carer was linked to their nearest Family Hub; the team also linked with health partners to ensure this was the right time for the sessions in the child's recovery as the child had undergone corrective surgery for a congenital bowel condition. This would benefit his physical and developmental recovery, having experienced many hospitals stays since birth and having to remain on his back for most of his life until now.

Parent/Carer shared, "I would never walk into a Family Hub but coming here on my doorstep feels less intimidating." Young Person shared, "People in my village are very old fashioned they will not go to one of your Hubs – they do not trust these places. In time they might trust you and you are here so they can feel better about it."

Resources

[Hub2U | Cumberland Family Hubs](#)

Find out more

Diane Harrison, Service Manager: Diane.Harrison2@cumbria.gov.uk

Nikki Donaldson, Team Manager: nikki.donaldson@cumberland.gov.uk