

I CAN



208

staff received the training including the modules on 'working with parents' and 'working with under 3s'

Delivered by **BHT Early Education and Training**
From **October 2018 – December 2022**

The I CAN project was a series of training sessions, guidance and support for childcare practitioners designed to improve the language environment for young children attending early years settings. It was developed from the nationally developed I CAN Early Talk modules and accreditation, and enabled settings to gain an award and an endorsement of their good practice in speech, language and communication.

How it was delivered

Training was delivered to practitioners in settings providing childcare and early education under the two-year-old funding scheme. The aim was to provide information and guidance to practitioners on the importance of early language skills, how to support them, and how to identify children in need of additional support. Additionally, the accreditation scheme allowed settings to demonstrate their commitment to supporting young children's early language development.

953

children benefitted from attending sessions with I CAN trained staff and therefore accessed a communication-friendly environment

Why this project was developed

In 2018, when this project was commissioned, children in the Better Start Bradford area were already behind their less-disadvantaged peers in language development. Approximately 35% of children were assessed as having or being at risk of developing a language delay, and 30% were assessed as not being school ready in terms of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

By upskilling practitioners and increasing their confidence in supporting young children's language development, the aim was to improve the outcomes for the children they supported.

The project set out to:

- Provide information and guidance to practitioners on the importance of early language skills
- Offer strategies, ideas and activities to support all children with their communication needs
- Support practitioners with the knowledge and expertise to identify children in need of additional support
- Allow settings to demonstrate their commitment to supporting young children's early language development

Impact and findings*

- Children were able to attend settings with staff who could provide quality support to meet and enhance their speech, language and communication needs.
- Staff reported greater confidence in identifying children at risk of language delay and in signposting to appropriate specialist services.
- Staff felt more confident in working with parents, including building and sustaining these relationships.
- I CAN was run as part of a suite of interventions offered by BHT Early Education and Training. This included Talking Together and Better Start Imagine, and therefore supported a holistic offer of support for children, families and practitioners.
- I CAN allowed BHT Early Education and Training to adapt the programme and the accreditation process, which ensured that the training was based around the needs of the Bradford population. It showed the high level of respect the national charity had for the local BHT team and the training they were delivering.
- BHT was very proactive in continuing to support settings and deliver training during the COVID-19 pandemic. This included adapting some of the training to an online offer and giving advice on how to support parents and children at home.
- The I CAN training was said to have had a positive impact on settings during the pandemic. The team was praised for the high level of mentoring and support that was offered via Zoom.

**This section includes information from both the evaluation report/s and project*



100%

of practitioners surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that 'the training course was helpful to my professional practice'

