

“It’s normally higher up not the people being affected by it”

Supporting young people in coastal towns in England to identify, design, deliver and communicate their own research projects



circle@kent.ac.uk <https://circlebythesea.org/>
www.linkedin.com/in/circlestudybythesea
Centre for Health Services Studies | University of Kent



Eida, T., Patton, H., Porter, K., Bell, M., Doran, Z., Cartwright, L.,
Asthana, S., Hayward, D., Kosaraju, A., Pyott, R. and **Kendall, S.**

Background

The place where children and young people grow up in England can make a difference to their health and care with those living in deprived coastal areas experiencing poorer outcomes than those living in equivalent areas inland, deepening population health inequalities (1-4).

Embedding the perspectives of young people and parents/carers/guardians with lived experience through patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE) can strengthen integrated community services to better meet place-based needs in coastal towns and improve outcomes (5,6).

CIRCLE study by the sea is working with young people and parents/carers/guardians to examine community service provision for children and young people in coastal towns in England; the extent and experience of integration; and the impact felt.

The study-wide PPIE work includes a funded parent co-applicant to the study involved from the bid-writing stage, young person and parent/carer lived experience advisory groups, young person and parent/carer representation on our stakeholder advisory board and communication and dissemination subgroup, and young researcher training with the Kent Youth Research Network and follow up support to design and deliver local youth-led research projects in three study areas.

YOUNG RESEARCHER PROJECT OBJECTIVES

To support young people living in coastal towns to develop and use their research skills to identify, develop and deliver a locally relevant research project.

To understand more about the impact of this work for the young people.

To strengthen the depth, relevance and impact of the overall research study.



THIS POSTER...

describes the process and outcomes to date of the young researcher projects in three of the CIRCLE study programme areas



Methodology

Working with partners in the study areas, our local researchers recruited young people to take part in the young researcher training. Some of these young people were already involved in the study’s lived experience advisory groups. Participants are 10-19 years old and have lived experience of health and social care services where they live. The Kent Youth Research Network (KYRN) facilitator adapted the programme to suit the needs of the participants in each area. KYRN, part of Kent County Council’s participation team, delivered the one-day young researcher training in each area covering: why research matters, what skills you already have for research and what you can learn; ways of collecting and presenting information to answer research questions that matter to you. Groups identified the questions important to them then selected the one to take forward, they have then been supported locally by researchers to do the research itself.

Projects



STREET LIGHTING STUDY

- Local street lighting seems to be staggered across the year, with more lighting during the tourist season.
- Young people are filming a single journey at intervals across the year to create a video examining safe lighting.



BARRIERS TO WORK EXPERIENCE STUDY

- Getting work experience is difficult, especially without family connections.
- Interviews with local 15-19 yr olds will provide detail on barriers and potential solutions to share with decision makers.



GROWING UP ON THE COAST STUDY

- There are particular benefits and difficulties associated with growing up in a coastal town
- Focus groups with local young people will build content for a podcast/series.

Impact and what’s next?

Once data collection is complete, the young people will be supported through an analysis workshop to identify key findings, then plan the best resources, routes and audiences to communicate their work. Current plans include video, animation and podcast outputs which we hope to share through local events.

We’ll work with the young people themselves to evaluate the impact of being involved, doing the research as well as the work it produces through creative methods.

Look out for event details and early insights on our website and LinkedIn

The study ends June 2027. We’re co-planning our end of study learning events, presenting young people’s research projects and study findings to local and national audiences.

References

- Chief Medical Officer (2021). **Chief Medical Officer’s annual report 2021: health in coastal communities**. Department of Health and Social Care, 21 July 2021. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60f98750e90e0703bbd94a41/cmo-annual_report-2021-health-in-coastal-communities-accessible.pdf
- Murray, E.T., Keating, A., Booker, C., Cameron, C., Whewall, S., Jivraj, S. (2025). Is it the place or the people in the places? Exploration of why young people in deprived coastal communities of England have worse mental health than their peers inland. **Wellbeing, Space and Society**, Volume 9, 100307, ISSN 2666-5581, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wss.2025.100307>
- Murray, E. T., Keating, A., Cameron, C., Benckekroun, R., Whewall, S., Booker, C., & Jivraj, S. (2024). Residence in coastal communities in adolescence and health in young adulthood: An 11-year follow-up of English UKHLS youth questionnaire respondents. **Health & place**, 87, 103239. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2024.103239>
- Wicks, C., McPherson, S., Booker, C., Trotta, A., Kumari, M., & Murray, E. T. (2025). Risk of diagnosed and undiagnosed mental distress in coastal and inland English residents: A pooled cross-sectional analysis of adult UKHLS respondents. **Health & place**, 95, 103501. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2025.103501>
- Hall, T., Loveday, S., Pullen, S., Loftus, H., Constable, L., Paton, K., & Hiscock, H. (2023). Co-designing an Integrated Health and Social Care Hub With and for Families Experiencing Adversity. **International journal of integrated care**, 23(2), 3. <https://doi.org/10.5334/ijic.6975>
- Fraser, B. & Singhvi, R. (2024). **Integrated Care Systems and the health needs of babies, children and young people**. <https://www.ncb.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/attachments/HPIG%20ICS%20Report%20-%2031.01.2024.pdf>