

# VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL CREATES CONSISTENCY OF APPROACH THROUGH MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING TRAINING

**CLIENT:** VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL  
**BRIEF:** MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING TRAINING PRACTITIONERS AND SOCIAL WORKERS WITHIN THE FLYING START TEAM

Flying Start is a Welsh Government programme supporting families to give children a better start in life.

## CHALLENGE

**Specialist training and a consistent approach**

The Flying Start team works with families who live predominantly in more deprived areas of the Vale of Glamorgan. This means that their practitioners often require additional training or tools to engage with these families. Motivation for change can be one area where help is needed for a myriad of reasons.

Joanna Card, the Parent Support Team Manager, wanted her team to undergo some Motivational Interviewing (MI) training as this model complements their existing strengths-based, person-centred, and collaborative approach. It allows the team to help reframe their perspective and try different techniques to support and inspire families while always putting the focus and needs of the parent first.

MI training can require specialist knowledge and so it was important when commissioning



this work to find a trainer with the right experience and skill set who could deliver this training consistently to the team. The roles within the Parent Support team are diverse and so having a consistent approach to core training such as MI is crucial to maintaining the same language, messaging, and practice when working with families.

Joanna explains,

*“In terms of choosing our training provider, we needed the trainer to be engaging and knowledgeable in their area. I was aware of Viv Mumby from previous training and knew she offered both of these qualities and would deliver the MI course from a position of expertise and experience”.*



## DESIRED LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To strengthen and empower her staff in the MI approach.
- To provide a consistent approach for new and existing staff e.g., using a common language in supervision.
- To offer alternative ways of working with families
- To have this MI training underpin all their work with families making their interactions meaningful, positive, and lasting.

## SOLUTION

### Two day motivational interview training

Platform Wellbeing trainer, Viv Mumby delivered a series of Motivation Interviewing sessions to practitioners and social workers from across the Flying Start team over two days. These sessions comprised a mixture of embedding the theory of MI using PowerPoint presentations and case studies right through to the practical application of the techniques discussed with engaging role play, group exercises, modelling behaviour, and Q&A.

#### Training components

A flavour of the training components included:

- Helping practitioners engage with families in alternative ways that resonate.
- Providing additional tools and practical techniques to help facilitate this alternative MI approach.
- Identifying goals, improving reflective listening, and generating change talk.
- Understanding what stage of change a person is at and helping parents move forward positively.

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*“I would definitely recommend training from Platform Wellbeing, and I have already referred your services to other departments within the Vale of Glamorgan who are looking for refresher training. I am keen to get some bespoke trauma-informed training and will be looking at your courses in this area too”.*

**Joanna Card, Parent Support  
Team Manager**

## RESULTS

### Developing a common language and approach

Kevin Lawrence, Healthy Relationships Social Worker at Flying Start, attended the course and found one beneficial aspect was learning the reframing of language such as “change talk” and “rolling with resistance” which has helped him to step back and place the focus on the parent and to work at their speed.

### Effective, up-to-date delivery

In terms of Viv’s training delivery, Kevin expands,

*“I liked the mix of delivery methods over the two days. Going from PowerPoint to modelling to breakout groups really kept the material engaging. Some courses I’ve been on can be fairly rigid in their delivery, but Viv is great at reading the room and adapting her methods to make it as relevant as possible and allowing for different people’s learning styles.”*

*“Viv made sure the training was fully up to date using recent case study examples and ensuring it was 100% relevant to the environment we work in unlike some courses where the training can be re-used year on year with no updates”.*

### Applying practical and alternative techniques in the field

*“The relevancy of the MI training meant I could put the theory into practice within the training itself through modelling but also on the job within the supervision setting.”*

*There was very little I would suggest could be improved on in terms of training but maybe if the two days were delivered separately a week apart then it would allow me to try out some of the techniques while they were fresh in my mind and help reinforce my learning even more”.*

### Benefits to staff and clients

Kevin cited the benefits he saw both on the staff undertaking the training within their professional development and on the client families they support.

One Parent Support Worker who attended the course and was new to the role coming from a construction background was able to move from a desire to “fix” situations for parents to a more active listening position thanks to the techniques and, importantly, the confidence to use them that the MI training provided.

Equally, Kevin cited an example of his work with a couple who experienced drug dependency and explained how he was able to go at the speed of trust and use the MI reflective listening techniques to help them engage at their own pace toward becoming drug-free.

