Interview Recording Thelma 14-9-21

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**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

people, staff, kids, relationships, suppose, therapy, children, work, [Consultant A], feel, thinking, environment, ddp, residential, [one of the children], [one of the children], support, experience, play, night

00:00 - Interviewer

Stick around and get it neither you because it's better if it's play could actually pick it up so yeah so the appreciative inquiry then it's got four things in it but the overall question I suppose for the interview is what works well what helps children recover when they come to [org] you know, if a difficult beginnings, they come here, what helps them recover is the broad question. And the first part of us four-part inquiry is discovery. So what is the best of, or what is the best that has been? No. So thinking about any stories or any aspects of [org] that you think what particularly well in terms of helping children

00:40 - Interviewee

and so one person that I'm thinking about, I was there from the start of their journey, arrived two days before them. And they arrived and I'm here they've now left they've moved on. So I've seen their full journey, and, and how they arrived to how they presented to how they left was incredible the difference. And they came, they were really challenging. They were really dysregulated they were in sort of safe holds every night for prolonged periods of time, three, four or five hours really, really difficulty really violent and whatever. And for me, what has helped what helped them was relationships with adults that were working with them consistently. And the love that I think all the staff a[ORG] Show, the kids that we work with, yeah, and it's they genuinely want to be here, they genuinely want to do this job. It's not just you couldn't just do this job, I don't believe for the money. Yeah, you could go and do something a lot easier. Because you wouldn't be emotionally tied. Yeah, we're emotionally invested in the lives of these young people. We're invested in their story, and we live their story with them. And we want to be a part of that. And that means the good, the bad, and the ugly. And I think, I personally think, it's okay to cry with these kids, I show the kids that I'm upset, and I'll tell them, I'm really sad. And this is why I'm sad, or I'm really happy, and I'm loving this joyous moment with you, or this is a really tough time. And I'd get how tough it is and I... And for that, that young person, his whole journey was based on the relationships that he had, he was able to form those trusting relationships he had, he didn't just have one anchor in his life, he had five or six people that he regarded as real anchors that he could turn to. So for him, there was very few times here where there wasn't one of them present. So other children that maybe just identify with one person, they go through the periods where that person's on annual leave, and they become lost. Yeah, because their anchor is not here anymore. Well, there's this wee boy had five or six trusted adults that, you know, he really got on well with, he did trust he was invested with. And it helped him progress through his time at [org]. And then, when he left, he was ready to move on. He spoke about moving on, he knew that it reached a certain age and that the time was right to move on. And he was able to move on. And he transitioned well, when you think about how he transitioned to us, it was quite horrific for him, quite traumatic for everybody involved. And how he then transitioned on, I think, last, I felt a sense of achievement, that we've got him into that place where we could transition on. Yeah, and well.

03:28 - Interviewer

So that's and one of the things that I'm really interesting when you were describing that the in terms of how you work, with children here is sounded so you were saying, I'm going to enjoy this joyous moment with you are, I'm upset because this is an upsetting situation. This is a difficult time. That sounds like a shared experience that you're describing between you and the child, I wonder if you can say, yeah, and

03:55 - Interviewee

It is a shared that experience, because you only know what they tell you. And the longer you build up the relationship with them, the more they'll hopefully tell you. And part of our DDP practice is to be accepting and not try and fix it. So when these kids come and they've got a horrible story to tell you, that's their story. And they didn't want us to fix it. They want us to listen to it, and hear it, and understand it with them, and to make sort of sense of it, and it is a shared experience and that's and there's no a day goes past that here where you’re not an emotional roller coaster. You know, they come in and their on highs, you're on a high with them, if they're on lows, if you're on a low with them, because you feel that every time because we are probably the only people that they're talking to, at that point in their life. when they're here, you know, they normally shut off from social workers, don't want, because they feel that the social workers know everything. And then so they trust us to tell us you know what's hurt them in the past, who has hurt them in the past, who they love, what's your aspirations? What they hope for the future? Where do they want to be? You know, and we listen to all these answers to the questions whereas, I don't feel the feel listened to from some outside agencies that work with them.

05:15 - Interviewer

Why is it that is that just because of the amount of time you can

05:19 - Interviewee

I think it's because we've kind of replicate as much a family environment as possible. So if you look at just [Bungalow 1] you know, I'm here personally, six days a week, most weeks, longer shifts, so the kids see me the come in from school, I'm here I'll be in the kitchen... And we try and make this as homely an environment as possible. And they're spending long periods of time with us. So it's not like Oh, that's a worker just coming in for a day shift. And we never referred to it as what we're on a day shift on a back shift or whatever. It's we're in [Bungalow 1] today. This is where we are today. And we I think the team in [Bungalow 1] especially treat this like their home, an extension to their home, so we've all got our slippers, and we'll put our slippers on at night. Because what's the point in saying to the kids 'shoes off at the door'. And we're all clumping about in boots and trainers and things like that. So we make this as much an extension of our home, and we're invested in our environment and the people that are at and they, it resonates with them, that actually, it's a wee bit more than just a worker. So different experience their getting, and kids that have maybe came from other services. That's what they see as the biggest difference. It's no a worker coming in and out. It's actually our [Bungalow 1] family. And whereas some kids that doesn't fit for especially kids that have got, still close contact with their family members. They don't want to hear that we're like a family because they want to be with their family. But the majority of the kids that we've got Haven't got those family connections and they're happy to accept that and we have family values in the bungalow as well we would like to sit down and have a Sunday lunch and chat about the best bits of our day every night we'll come together we'll have dinner together. And that stuff that maybe I remember as a kid, of really, my mom and dad both worked they were a young couple but we always came together at night and that was the only time in the day that we came together as a family and sometimes that will be here the only time of day that everybody will all come together because we're all busy and everybody's you know as everybody sits down at night and has that meal and chats about their day and learns about our day, and the kids learn about us and we don't ever close off to them. So the kids in here know that I've got a nephew, that I've got a husband, you know that I've got a mom and a dad and I'll talk about my wee sister and that makes them feel part of our lives and the wider life not just the time at [ORG] as well

07:48 - Interviewer

yes. So it's an interesting job to work closely I've been observing things is real and that distinction between the personal and the work the personal and professional worlds is really blurred here in many ways is that a fair Yeah, you have to play is that and I'm wondering then because the first thing you mentioned mentioned was the relationship is that an important aspect of building relationships to these children do you think Yeah, I

08:18 - Interviewee

think so. I think that you we expect them to be open with us and tell us everything and they don't know us from Adam, and if that can't be reciprocated, how do you ever achieve that? So I'm, I'm open I'll talk about my family. I want them to know that I've got cats and what some of the kids like looking at pictures and obviously they can't meet the people that will love out with [org] but they can see pictures of them. And it gives them a sense of they are part of your life and they're not just like a job to us. And I think we want them to be open and engaging. And I think it's important that we show them how to do that by being open and engaging and share and one wee boy in here in particular, [one of the children] if I say something or I remember when I was a child and I done this, he'll sit and tell me when he was a child this happened to him and his memories of being with his foster parents and his time when he was in hospital and that, so you know it helps, it encourages them to share their stories with us

08:19 - Interviewer

Yeah, that's interesting because I suppose we think of children in particular ways but actually as adults you and I if we would build our relationship or our friendship that's how we would build trust is that happened to me or I struggled my mental health before you can order and then you build up that trust like that So suppose that

09:37 - Interviewee

was the kids that we have here. It's not they've had so much so many adults in their life that for reasons to distrust them yeah, that probably it's not how you would build a relationship with a child outwith the care setting, you know, it would be a more it would be an easier relationship to do and it would be you're their caregiver or And they would have that trust in you because you're their person that's going to feed them and nurture them and care for them. But these kids have been let down at every every single turn, so to bring them in a group with five or six adults and say we're your trusting adults, well I've heard that before my mom couldn't do it my dad couldn't do it, my gran couldn't do it, Auntie Jeanie down the street couldn't do it, and now I'm here and you're telling me that you can do it, so we have to look at it differently for them because us just providing a homely environment and five, three meals a day and activities and clothing that's not enough because they've had all these promises before so you have to be open and you have to try and build that relationship with them in a different way

09:37 - interviewer

and what are the things that it because that is that's a that's a big ask and our job isn't it and I take the point this is no a normal job. Or like other jobs as you say, if you want some you can go and get some less emotional intensive but what needs work? What is it that works? Well here that allows you as a person to be that open with these kids to feel able to do that? What are the things that are in place the help,

11:10 - Interviewee

so I think that the DDP training that as everybody, all staff go through is is brilliant. And for me, I saw you do DDP level one. Normally, when you first start your journey, and I've always thought that so that was an eye opener, I'd never knew anything about DDP training or anything like that. And I've done it and you really delve into you as a person. And I actually said that, I think that you should do DDP level one twice, the first time you do it, you're not thinking about these kids. You're thinking about you, [Consultant A] digs deep. and gets you to think about your up bringing, your attachment story, what was good for you what was bad for you? And it's such an emotional training course. And the reason I think you should do it twice is because if you've done it again, maybe 8 months later, or you could then think about the kids, in that setting and not just yourself. So the DDP m training every staff member gets, its it's not a practice that we're trying, you know, I'll do DDP today we're trying to install it in staff that that's what we eat, sleep and breathe. And that's that's how we should be treating each other. So the kids can see us we're colleagues being open and honest, and chatting and and being friends and and having that nice time. And then we're transferred over to the kids as well. And for me, I think that it makes it an organisational thing that even like the maintenance men, have done the DDP training, the admin staff have done it, it connects us all. Yeah, so we all know that this is how we're all working as as a large group, and I've never had that before. Yeah, I've never worked in a residential setting before this is my only experience with residential, but certainly my last employer, which was a very different industry, but I've never ever felt that everybody was singing from the same hymn sheet our goal was the same in the last job was sales sales sales, it was to hit the targets. But everybody's done that, all differently whereas we're all working exactly the same. in a certain sense.

13:14 - Interviewer

Yeah, yeah. Within the broad area, and then having to bring yourself to that. Yeah. So that's interesting to set in, sounds that you're describing the the training and in terms of the model that [Consultant A] provides. There was part of that was about knowledge for you really understanding this process, but part of that was a reflection and understanding yourself.

13:37 - Interviewee

Yes, yeah. And so before I had started with [org], but never really done reflection on anything, I've just lived my life. And where and if I done a mistake, well I'll not do that again. And I'll just move on. And so coming in to [ORG]. They promote reflection in every aspect of your journey here, so whether it be good practice, bad practice, working with the children? How do you deal with your colleagues, you reflect, reflect, reflect. And that's such a nice way of being to be able to sit down at the end of the day, and how did you think that went, oh I was feeling pretty rubbish about that tonight, and then having your colleagues pick you up, tell you that that wasn't how they seen that and they felt that this was good, and that was good. And I think that we're all really good at coming together when, because it has an emotional job. Yeah. people recognise if somebody is down. Yeah. And it's your colleagues that bring you back up. You know, and I think that sounds like a cliche, but we are like a family here. And you couldn't do this if you didn't have these relationships with your colleagues. Because you do spend more time here than with your family. You know, the shift work that we do and the hours that you invest in here. So you're with these people more and it is just as it's just, if you're secure, we feel safe. I feel safe to come into my work to work here. I feel safe to make mistakes and know that You know, I'm not gonna be judged by that we'll work through it. And I hope that other people feel safe to explore things and, and conversations and different things, and not be judged, and to just be open and honest. And to always remember that everybody is always doing the best that they can. Yeah, so my best may be 10 times better than somebody else, but it's their best. And they're doing the very best that they can that day. And we're all really accepting of that. Yeah.

15:27 - Interviewer

And that is that that's then creating an environment where you feel safe to be able to be emotionally involved. Yeah, then because you're not feeling worried

15:37 - Interviewee

Nope. And like I personally, don't feel that I have to come in here and put a face on. Like, I think that my face will tell one story. And I'm alright, my face is telling people that I'm not alright and I don't have to do that here. Because actually, it's alright to come in and say, I'm No, alright? Or so I remember when My key child was moving on, it was really emotional. I didn't feel that that was the right choice. But the organisation had made that choice. I was upset. But everybody supported me with that. It was alright to be upset they've been through it all before. And the support was, and I think that's another thing that makes [org] work, is the level of support that you get? So if you're a care worker, if you get support for the managers, if you're a manager, you're getting support for your senior managers. And as a manager, I got a lot of support from the staff. Yeah, you know, they'll support me in situations.

16:32 - Interviewer

Yeah, yeah. Yeah. So. So there's been some things to consider. But that's kind of a commitment, almost like a, I suppose our Russian door Where?

16:43 - Interviewee

The wheel? Yeah,

16:44 - Interviewer

I've got a key that environment for staff like that. Yes. And across there. Yeah, that's really interesting. The other thing that you mentioned just at the start there that I thought was interesting at all, you know, the staff that you're working with, and they really want to be here in the care sector or something in terms of the values that that go on for staff, you know, I'm just when can you just be lucky getting these staff?

17:11 - Interviewee

So I think that the environments is a big thing, people love working here, yeah, you know, look outside, When, when the kids are here it's fun filled, when the kids are not here, it's so tranquil, you know, it's a nice place. It's a relaxed atmosphere, if anybody's came, so we've got people for different walks of life. And if you've came from, like a corporate background, I had to go in suits every day to work, and six inch heels, and a full face of make-up and that, and you can come in here, and the kids are so accepting, you've put your leggings on or your comfy socks so, you know, so the environment is a big thing. Yeah, people like that. The [org] are really good at being so flexible, like, you know, again, I had to open a shop at nine o'clock every morning. So we had to be in at quarter to, to have to have our team meeting, you know, the shift starts at half, seven if you're, five minutes, there's no a great big. It's no big deal. You know, everybody's here, everybody's in place. And it's just a much nicer environment for everybody. And I think that people talk fondly, of [org]. So for instance, my mom worked here 20 years ago. That's how I knew about it. And I wanted to come and work here because my mom had told me all the stories and I thought that sounds like that would be good for me. And I would like it, and my mom was like, definitely, you should apply for it. I've then since when and spoke about my love for the place because I do genuinely absolutely love my job. My place. And I'm not saying that I don't have days where I hate the place. I hate the people here, everybody about it, but they are very few and far between. So to the extent where my brother works here, cause he heard how much I spoke with the place. And I think that, you know, when we've been at college courses, and you've been in a room doing a HNC and it's like, people speak proudly. Yeah, they're proud to say that they work for [org] and proud to say what the organisation is, and the children that we work with. And I know like, when I was doing my HNC, it was a very eclectic group and there was one from here and one from there and that, and i was i was talking proudly of [org], and I was only one in that room talking proudly of where they worked, you know, and so we had a couple of people apply from my course that had probably heard us talking. And I think that our interview process is really good. Yeah, you know, I am invested in in our interview process because it's that wasn't the experience I got Yeah, I came, I've done an interview and I've got the job. And then I was like, Oh my god, yeah, for what this is not what they told me like, and I think I've told you before the first night I was on shift, can you cook the diner? Aye, who for - everybody? nine people I was standing crying with chicken nuggets at the Cooker because it nobody had said that to me, that was simple things because our interview process. Now. Before COVID times We used to have walk arounds. So we'd have kids involved, they'd see the bungalows, they'd meet the staff. And for people that it's just not for they pull out, which is much better than employing people telling everybody this is great. And it's like some kind, kinda yoga retreat that we're working in. Yeah. And in they come. And it's like, oh, my god, no, yeah. So I think that the interview process is really good, and I think the interview process is an honest process that we do. And I think we're not tough, but we're honest. We're asked lots of questions. Yeah, we do the short arounds, you know, we do an induction, we do a shadow period. There's opportunities to say, this isn't for me. And thankfully, the people that get through all that, because it's a lengthy process. They're already shown their investment, because their coming for walk arounds, their coming for interviews, they're doing a written assessment. Like, they're invested, they’re wanting here they want to be here. So by the time they actually get on to the floor, with the children and they start, they've went through quite a bit to get here.

21:05 - Interviewer

Yeah, yeah, it's no shock to the system. And it's interesting because you in particular, I suppose and a few other people here as very inspiring the way that you talk about your work. I mean, I did I definitely get the sense for a lot of people here that they really love the job.

21:22 - Interviewee

Absolutely love that. I mean, people, some people will just think, who's she, what it is, I love it, I couldn't ever see me doing anything else and I did leave for seven weeks, because, and I don't know what the turning point for me leaving at that point was, but I think I had got bedazzled from my last place. who were desperate to get me back. They were offered me all sorts of packages and a real opportunity. And I done it. And then for seven weeks, I was miserable. And for seven weeks, I remember it clear as the texting [a manager] every day oh what's happening, how's this one? And he was like, why don't you just come back, say I'll come back sessional. And then [a manager] was like, let's, let's just, you want to come back, don't you and I was like, aye can I come back. And he went you can start on Monday, and I was never so relieved, in all my life I love and it sounds, I love the kids we work with because I do believe we make a difference. And that's why I wanted to work with children. I started off Fostering, I wanted to make a difference. And whilst I'm not naive to think that I can change the world, and change all their experiences, we can help individuals and we can give them experiences. We can give kids love that they've never never experienced it might be that we're the ones that just provided them with the food that they've never been provided with. And I actually love it. And I love the staff team that we're working with. And I love the vision for [org] and where we're going Yeah, and how it's developing and that the talk there is talk of a new school being built, and talk of a secondary unit. And talk of us being committed as an organisation to throughcare and after care. Cause that let's us down, as a nation. Yeah, that let's us down and I know that first-hand. With having a my wee sister who's about to turn 18 there's not a lot of through care after care for certain individuals. So for us to say, for [one of the children], for instance, who has been here for so long that we're still going to be committed to her right the way through. I think it's an incredible thing. And to be part of that journey I think is incredible. Yeah, and I hope that one day although she hates this just now that she'll turn around and look and think, you know what it's better having one placement and aye she's maybe seen a lot of staff come cause that's the nature of, people will move on or whatever. But there's also a lot of staff that have been here for 20 odd years. That are not moving on. Yeah, you know, and like [a manager] he's celebrate 22 years, [a worker]'s 20 years, there is people that will be here and they'll see her out through her full journey.

23:50 - Interviewer

Yeah, and to have those and to have people who support young young adults as well which typically parents would

23:57 - Interviewee

yet because my parents done that for me and I now just think, like, how much of a support they were for me at that age and how how these kids I suppose, [one of the children] you met [one of the children] didn't you? Yeah. He can just pulls at my heartstrings because who's going to, who has, he's got nobody Now, yeah, so who's going to support him and guide him. And you know, I remember one day coming in and telling my dad that I was gonna be a florist. And he went, all right. He went you're allergic to flowers, remember that, but they hare-brained ideas, I was able to explore and come out and my parents guided me. And sometimes they made decisions for me that I didn't like at the time. But now as an adult, I look back and thank goodness and it just I think it resonates home like for somebody like [one of the children] and there's lots more cases like [one of the children]. And he's got nobody. So if he if he was still at [ORG] and had that opportunity to go into the secondary unit and have that continued support, and really be invested in the relationships with the staff. That he's now knew For like 678 and nine years, then the chances are like that he would probably continue the relationships after leaving care. You know, [Consultant A] is still in touch with two or three of her people, they're now in their 40s and 50s... And that's all you could hope for. You know hope for that somebody like [one of the children], who hasn't got any family members could identify with the staff, and have them so that's hopefully what will be for [one of the children].

25:27 - Interviewer

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. And I suppose that's the aim for the future in this this commitment to these these children. That's the fundamental principle, I suppose. And that that love in your job in the working staffer gets useful. You've spoken with the release shows is that the chain in that you've had as well, are there any other things of assitance, the physical environment, you've mentioned, any other things that seem to be think, contribute to that,

25:54 - Interviewee

I think the openness to all walks of life. So we didn't all fit in one box, we seem and you'll know that, that to meeting all different staff, and their openness to somebody having an idea. So like, [a worker] for instance, he is our Bear Grylls you know, and he can go to [a manager] and he can see what you try this and ay, on you go, and then you'll have somebody equally, who is what is start a sewing bee. And then what sewing machines and aye let's try that. And it's just the diversity of here away anything goes kind of thing if it's, if it's, creating an experience, then we're happy. And I suppose it's how enriched the children's lives are from all our different walks of life, and all our different experiences that we can bring to the table. And how open [org] are to having these makes it quite unique as well, I think, because everybody's got everybody's came to some type of background. And they've got some kinda skills to bring to the table or, you know, hobbies that they like doing or whatever they can share with the kids. And I do think that that's unique because other places or other workplaces, it's like, well, we do this, you need to learn to do that. And we do this and you need to learn it and our leaders actually here it's like, well, I can do this. Yeah, well, let's try that. Yeah,

27:14

I'll do that. Let's try that. So it's really good.

27:17 - Interviewer

You have a good spread, I think. I wonder I suppose we're just using I'm thinking about it. In fact, I suppose that gives you if you get a chance to try different things, you get a lot of opportunities to succeed. Do you find the the thing that you're into?

27:32 - Interviewee

Yeah, and what you're good at exactly. And so like, I'll always laugh and joke, I'm not anyway interested in any physical stuff. So [a worker] tries to get me up hills all the time, I will not be buying walking boots, and I'm not gonna fall. But likewise, stuff that I'm maybe good at. That way I'll sit with the kids will watch a movie, we'll have that cuddle the closeness, the head, massages, the touch and everything like that. [a worker] couldn't think of anything worse. He couldn't do that. And I think it's about recognising people's strengths and playing to the strengths. So, you've got, if you had twenty of [a worker] in [org], it wouldn't work. Yeah. And if you had 20 of me in here, that wouldn't work. And it's all coming together as a team. So, you've got homemakers, natural homemakers, that take on the role in making the bungalow nice. puffing up the cushions, tidying up moving washing, making dinners, making snacks. You've got them, you've got the outdoor people the active folk, you've got them. That want to be out all the time you've got the ones that are wanting to do beauty and hair and nails and makeup and the ones that have what you take the kids out and do the shopping and it. And it's all these different things that just make it such a good team. Yeah. And it means that the kids are not reliant upon just one person. Yeah, you know, so and [one of the children] like [one of the children] can get such different things for different people. And she needs that constant because she burns out with people quickly. So if I couldn't turn round and say, right, I'll be with [one of the children] today, off you go, I'll be with [one of the children] nine to 10 she'd burn out with me before I'd burn out with her. She needs like you'll be with [a worker] this morning, then you have your lunch and then Thelma’s going to this with you and then you have your tea and then [a worker]’s going to do that. And that's how she works. Yeah. And I think that we've got that resource. Works so well, yeah, Like [one of the children] He burns people out. Yeah, he's very intensive and when he's with you is with you 100%. And we need to be able to say so that he's getting the best experience. And actually staff are getting the best experience to swap out. And I think we're very good at that.

29:33 - Interviewer

Yeah, I think that's a fascinating thing here. I suppose one of the things you look at it and I think it has changed and it should change in as going to change. But this idea that residential childcare is like our last resort thing. And actually for some kids it should be I think you've seen it

29:49 - Interviewee

I fought for my foster child to get into residential, I identified. So I got a foster child. It was to taken from mum placed to me and he thought That he was with me because I wanted a wee boy, he couldn't see that has mum couldn't keep him safe nobody had done that work, with him or had the conversations, and he loved his mom, and he loved me. And he loved the life that we had, but he always want to, and he was so torn. And I said, I have never been a residential. And I said, he needs a place that he's got workers coming in on shift fresh starts constantly, and nobody that's going to take over mum's role, because he knows who his mum is. And that's where he wants to go back. And I fought really hard because you're right, his social work team at that time, residential was a last resort, oh you didn't want to put a bairn in residential. And I hope that we've evolved, and I hope we keep evolving, because actually, some kids come here and they can thrive and flourish. And just become absolutely wonderful. wee human beings, because of the environment, we're creating for them.

30:53 - Interviewer

And if they can come here with you having 15 or 20.

30:58 - Interviewee

Yeah, and some people just don't fit into families. Yeah, some people just find that too intense, too. You know, suppose [one of the children]'s one, you know, is resentful of the families, because he's not got one. And he was in foster care. And they moved on about and everything. It just doesn't, he's resentful, you know, he wants to be here. And he does want the figures here. What he said to me, you'd be a really good mum I'd like you to be my mom. So he wants the figures but he doesn't want a traditional family setting and he likes having peers, but that he lives with. outwith just his brother he likes the different staff. And he is one that does like to, you know, he'll think, right, I'll go with [a worker] because I'm going to her and she's young, and I'll get clothes with her. But I'll be up the hill with [a worker] because actually he will have the stove out. And, and he likes that. Yeah, yeah, and I hope that residential doesn't always become the last resort because a lot of the time, we were seeing more now where they're coming in younger, so [one of the children] has come in, he's is seven. So it's a real opportunity for us, you know, to to do some real good work with him, rather than, you know, getting them at 11 and, and as you say they've had five or six or multiple placements break down, and they've kind of gave up they've lost their way. The relationship with social workers is really fraught because they've had to be moved about and they're not as accepting of what we've got an offer.

32:28 - Interviewer

Yeah, I think that certainly something has come up for me, you know that the structure here and also the love and the joy and laughter and all that is all here. Plus, you've got as you say a staff team that can refresh Yeah, to deal with extremes and stuff. Yeah, I've been quite intrigued by that whole element. So that's possession. Residential is a particular thing that somebody got in their mind about what residential is? Yes, but yeah, it can be really, really fantastic. That's me singing your praises. I've loved my time here. Oh, and

33:05 - Interviewee

we've loved having er, it's been a really good. Yeah. And I think that most people that come up here, enjoy it. I would like to think that that always made to feel welcomed. Yeah. And certainly the feedback. We've had students in the past and anybody else that's, like been here, and they feel quite a part of it quite quickly And the kids are accepting of new people. Yeah, like new people. Yes, actually, it's somebody that doesn't at all, but last night, they were in trouble. So that they're quite happy to be with the new people. And they find that new people are always really enthusiastic about getting to know and going out and playing the football and it's been brilliant having you here.

33:42 - Interviewer

I think if you're up for getting involved Yeah, they're up for it. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. I've discovered I love to play basically [laughs]

33:51 - Interviewee

what a great skill to have as an adult enjoy play and play is everything yeah.

33:57 - Interviewer

And enjoy time with each other and that's been a thing I've been thinking about a lot you know, because we always think about these therapeutic models and stuff that I suppose DDP has playful right at the start of the pace model. But I've been thinking a lot about what happens between so, rather than me doing something that’s therapeutic for you. Actually, us doing something together and enjoying each other's time that actually happens between us yeah, rather than me doing it to you yeah to me

34:24 - Interviewee

that just join us connect them the two together Yeah,

34:27 - Interviewer

I suppose it comes back to what you were saying that relationships are key for us you know, TT to enjoy time with each other to spend time each other in ti

34:36 - Interviewee

and a lot of times you know, we all set and we'll talk as a as a management team. We'll talk about like What direct work are we going to encourage for [one of the children], for [one of the children] or whatever. And with the best will in the world, you know, you can say [one of the children] would benefit from direct work with his key worker on safe touch, and [a worker] will have to sit down and plan on a Tuesday at two o'clock. him and [one of the children]'s gonna go away with a booklet. And they'll do this piece of direct work. But actually, in real life, direct work happens every single day, spur of the moment and what we're probably not as good at is recording it as it's happening. But like you say playing with Lego can start a conversation about memories or feelings or future, whatever. And that can be a real good piece of work because you're there, you're in the moment and you're doing it together and is the therapy together, and I suppose what we just need to get better at recording that instead of the two o'clock on a Tuesday this is going to take place is recording all these moments

35:36 - Interviewer

here are Yes. As if nothing happened before or after 2 O'clock!

35:40 - Interviewee

Aye! It's 2 O'clock, that's all that happened... we didn't do anything with [one of the children] before or after it but two o’clock on a Tuesday and, actually, I think a lot of the time staff sell their self short. Yeah. About what they're actually doing. So when you say your staff, I think they direct work the word, the phrase scares them because 'oh, I don't know how to do direct work', of course you do, you do it everyday, you know, getting [one of the children] to brush her hair is actually direct work because she doesn't just brush her hair. She has to be spoken to and encouraged and nurtured and all the rest of it. And it's something that you do without even thinking of. And people sell their self short all the time. I think staff because I think as a nation as a society, we don't generally like praise that much. It's it's easier to sit and have a conversation and hear that you have not done something as good than for you are wonderful. And you done that so well. And that was brilliant everybody feels really awkward. And it's really interesting when you go through a team meeting and and if you do like a positive praise or positive practice or whatever, everybody is so awkward. But if you go to a team meeting and you're, like you have not done this, and you've not done that everybody is quite 'oh, right, aye aye'. But start to praise everybody. It's like oh my God. Jesus and, it's really interesting, as a nation we don't really accept praise that well in general.

36:58 - Interviewer

And I wonder, I wonder as well, there's something else in that and can absolutely get that started, you know, or do you have to say, you know, we always take excuses. Yeah, yeah, yeah. But there's something else in that as well about this thing of it. That's what kind of therapeutic in therapy that this particular specialist psychologist does. You know, and there is a need for my videos, but they've been and obviously this project specifically is looking about, actually, what's therapeutic about having dinner together. And I know he does kind of everyday stuff because the the suspicion is that is actually we have the main therapy is happening, but the main changes happen. So I'm wondering if people are only valuing I, that's my direct work, rather than

37:44 - Interviewee

the 11. Yeah, and what and what they're doing, I think that, I don't know, do we take it for granted it? Do we become complacent? That you know, every night there'll be a meal served? Do we forget that these kids, That's not their experience? Because we've been here so long, and that's just our normal. And actually, it's not their experience that they'll have a hot bath every night. You know, it's not their experience that they've got a carpet. And we sometimes wonder why he's always rolling about the carpet , because they've never felt a clean carpet before. And so yeah, did we have we become complacent? Have you become blinkered? are we devaluing what we're doing? Yeah. Because actually, in everyday life, we are, we are doing this therapy and like, staff will you'll hear staff say all the time. I'm not a therapist. I'm not I'm not counsellor, I'm not that. But what about the skills that you have got? Yeah. And you know, what about the fact that these kids will choose us to tell about, you know, they'll make their disclosures, about what's happened to them, it's not a therapist that the making these disclosures to, because that's who they see once a week in a hut for an hour. Yeah. And although that relationships probably really good, and it says that there are so people that are kinda living with, that they're going to come out with most and the whole way, I think for the minute they get up in the morning to the minute that we've read the whole environment and everything that we do is based on it being a therapeutic environment for them. It's meant you know, it's meant to be warm and homely and loving and kind and caring and nurturing as well as having the sensory aspects of it and all different things like that. And this is just what we do every day. Yeah. And everybody does it every day and everybody does it to the very best of their ability everyday

39:30 - Interviewer

Yeah, yeah. Yeah it's remarkable what I mean I've got a fieldnote about tee time one friend there's a couple of teams here but wanted me think a bit there. The kids and what they have experienced in their lives and stuff the boys were five, boys were all here at the time. So [one of the children], [one of the children], and [one of the children] are all here at the time. And we're at the kitchen table getting dinner, you've made Chinese, or these conversations, I don't want to hear what don’t want, I want to hear what you do want, and this can have matriarchal effect. Yeah, but it was it did feel as though I've reflected on my field that felt to me like a family. Yeah, I did feel you know, there was no argue that it no no. Same conversations

40:12 - Interviewee

that need bubble over No, there wasn't any. You know, it was loud. It was noisy. But if you were a family with five kids it would be loud, it would be noisy. And you're right, and I remember that night because it was a lovely. Because everybody was having we pockets, of conversations. And it wasn't a one person monopolising the conversation. Everybody was just chatting. And it's night, it's like that they I think, oh we are getting it right. Yeah, no, it was just such a nice night. And everybody enjoyed it. And everybody had some tea, and it was a nice experience for us.

40:44 - Interviewer

Yeah. And yeah, my Yeah, and 25-30 minutes and doing that, considering the experience you thank God that, yes, that's a lot of work this will only achieve, you know, again, for these kids, we will do your best. It's brilliant. And we've actually covered some of the other areas because you're talking about the the the other thing is, as design, what is the best? Well, as are what has been in that and sort of talked about the relationships, the environment, the culture here certainly, the physical environment, all that kind of stuff. So the children and staff can feel safe and happy and enjoy the relationships and also talked about him where things are going with the service in terms of the development for older children potentially through care. Is there anything, even if you really just have a magic wand that you think or if we could do this, I love it? That would be something I would do, I would include?

41:42 - Interviewee

If I was a magic wand, I'd have every kid on one to one? Yeah, I think that they would all benefit for that. I think that that experience could be even a richer experience for them. And that would be in an ideal world. I think that it would open up opportunities, because I think that sometimes group living, you're restricted, depending on what the rest of the group will do. And so and that's just life, and I suppose that is normal life, and probably having one to one support, throughout your life isn't... You know, I never grew up with it? I had My brother? Yeah, and my mom and my dad, and their time was jobs and all that. Yeah. But I think for kids in residential, that would be my if I had a magic wand, that's what I would do one to one support. Because kids that come into residential that don't need one to one support. See the ones that are getting it. And they want it Yeah. So for instance, [one of the children] came to us, he'd been in foster care. He didn't need one to one support or wherever, but he sees that [one of the children] gets it all the time. And he thinks I want that. Yeah. And he does want that. And he wants that constant. Somebody to play with somebody to read him a book, and on his time and his terms, and no necessarily want to be told, like. If you wait 20 minutes, I'll do this with this, and then I'll go and do the tea, then I'll, I'll get to you sort of thing. And so I think and I know there's one to one services out there, and I don't know, they've probably probably think that, you know, they would have something else or whatever. But just for me here, I would have one to one for the kids

43:13 - Interviewer

staff and would be something in general levels. Yeah,

43:16 - Interviewee

staffing levels would be increased. And probably more, more therapy. We sort of got a therapy pod down there. I'd like to see more of that. Yeah, I think to see different, like, just us absorbing, you know, different types of therapies. So that so at the moment, and I think we've got a very good ratio of thearaplay and play therapy, and the work that has been done but I'd like to see every kid have a therapeutic input from a professional, to work coincide with the staff work and everything like that. Yeah. And at the moment, you know, there's only [a worker] who does the thearaplay. She can only do so many kids. time constraints. So it'd be about every kid getting access to a therapy, whether it be art therapy, pet therapy, play therapy, whatever. But to have something like that,

44:09 - Interviewer

because you're an interesting mix of different specialists here yet psychologists to play therapists speech and language. Yeah. In [a worker] play therapy. Yeah. Yoga at the school. Yeah. yoga session. Yeah. And wood shed and things like that. So it seems to me that there's some of that it's about direct work work with children, but it seems like quite a few to specialists are working with his staff as well. Is that something that was well here?

44:35 - Interviewee

Yeah, definitely. So I think that the post of [Consultant D] there and [Consultant C] and [a worker] join in their team. And so I think the therapy team, their their focuses, not just necessarily on the children, but on the staff team. And I think that is probably been what's missing Yeah, years ago, back in the day. They used to have social workers and psychologists and that were for the staff Yeah, as I drop in drop out it and I think that that is missing, you need that kinda so having them that here a [Consultant C] that can come up and talk to you for hours about [one of the children] and give you a different perspective because that's her specialism is just brilliant, invaluable. And it's the same like when [Consultant A] comes and talks to you about. You have a team around the child day and you speak about one child in particular? And she's able to give you that different perspective, you know, because sometimes when you're living here, when you're living with [one of the children], you become living in the minute with him. Yeah. And sometimes you need to take that step back and think about his story again, and think about how he perceives the world because he perceives the world from a different from you and I. So how the world works for him is completely different to what works for you and I. And sometimes you just lose sight of that. Yeah, so having these people will come in, and we will speak to you and I it not to be a big thing. They don't have to phone up and book in a diary appointment know that, you know, [Consultant C] just pops out. Yeah, have you got minute Aye and you're an hour later`? And that's really nice. Yeah, and that's really good. Yeah,

46:11 – Interviewer

that's specialists have been really interesting. Talk to us. Very impressed by [consultant A] as well you know, we're not concerned and her pragmatism and practicality as well, you know, you can't be 24 or 24-Seven therapists actually some days are shit. And it's really difficult for anybody Yeah. And recognised. Yeah, so that was an important cause I was kind of thinking or was that late to be cash really switched on DDP?

46:40 - Interviewee

So for instance, [one of the children]. doesn't work with DDP Really? Yeah. Cuz he's so different. Yeah. And so staff can sometimes feel deskilled, or a failure Yeah, yeah. Because everything that they've been taught and they know , and that works so well with other kids doesn't work with [one of the children]. And it's up to us every day. Getting into that toolbox and finding a different way to work with him and what works one day with [one of the children] won't work the next. Yeah, you know, what I say to [one of the children] one day he'll take and will do and then the next day Oh, He'll be like, no I'm not listening to that. So he's, he's really challenging. Yeah. And so yeah.

47:17 - Interviewer

Do you one of the things just sorry, I realise I'm cutting out your time here. Is there anything that you would like to say that with no cover D Thank you.

47:26 - Interviewee

Thanks. So I think it was really nice chat and talk. So thank you.