



Welcome Pack

Service Co-Design Research - round 2 focus groups

PhD Programme

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The Research

An exploration of the use of service co-design methods in parenting education for women who are justice experienced

My research question:

What are the views, experiences, and perceptions of the efficacy, effectiveness, and acceptability of service and co-design methods in parenting services, programmes and education with women who have experience of the justice system?

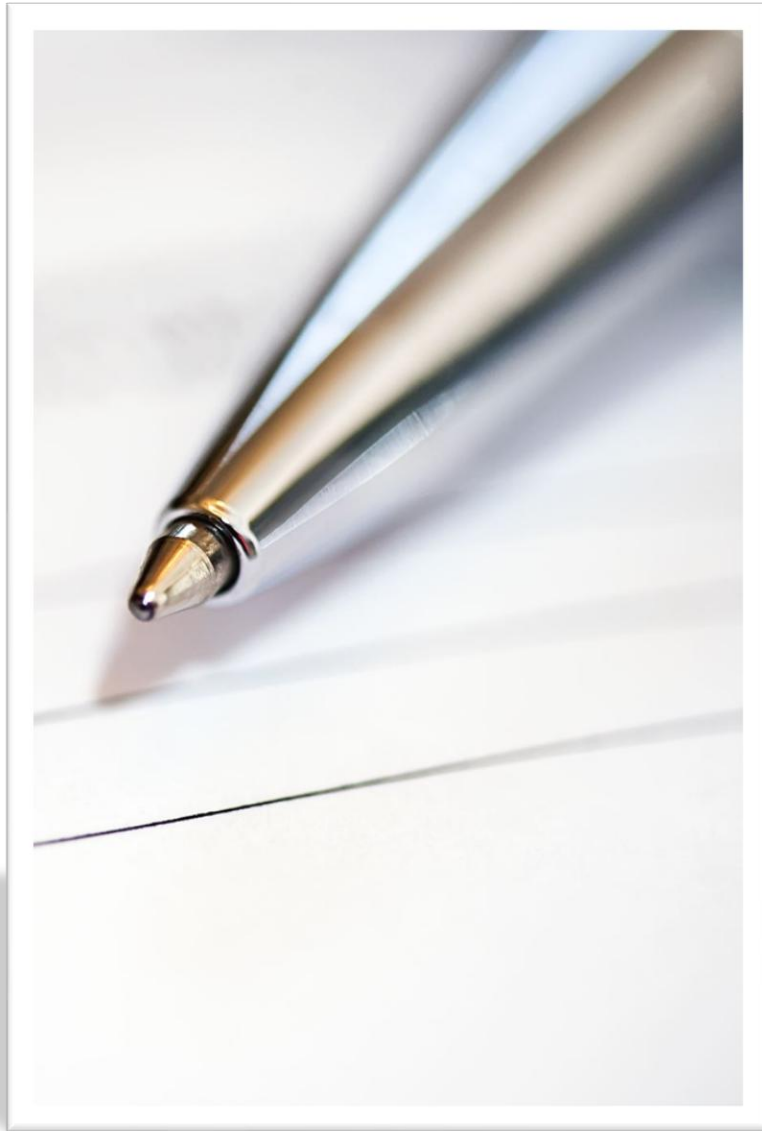
Many thanks for helping...

"Co-design has a close relationship with service design.... Further it is argued that co-design is central to service design research and practice because of the collaborative nature of services".

(Vink et. al, 2016, p. 392)

"Any service redesign must place the woman and her children at the centre of the service"

(Breuer, 2021, p1)



Ethics

A favourable outcome has been given for the whole research programme
(including OU Staff and Students)

A participant information sheet will be given to all those that part. You will be asked to sign a consent form to join each study within the programme.

The focus groups and interviews will be transcribed with your consent. No recording (video or audio) will take place.

Anonymisation of the data will take place within two weeks of the group taking place.

You can withdraw your consent prior to anonymisation



SERVICE CO-DESIGN

“Designing services together with users, staff, and partners

Key features

- Combines tools from service design (like journey maps)
- With the principles of co-design (like shared decision-making)
- Focuses on real services, not just ideas or products



SERVICE DESIGN

“Designing how services work so they meet people's needs.”

Key features:

- Focuses on end-to-end journeys, not just one moment
- Balances the needs of users and staff
- Includes systems, processes, technology, and people

Example: Designing a new support service for mothers in prison might include...



CO-DESIGN

“Designing with people, not just for them.”

Key features:

- Includes people with lived experience, not just professionals
- Values everyone's ideas equally
- Builds trust, empathy, and ownership

Co-designing a parenting support app with women in probation might involve...

- Running workshops with them
- Letting them test rough ideas (like paper prototypes)
- Changing the design based on their feedback

Bringing Service Design and Co-Design Together

The Design Brief (Service Challenge)

Title: "Design Your Own Way: Our family journeys – growing together even when sometimes we are apart"

Goal: To create a scalable, regenerative, and evidence-informed framework and toolkit for hyper-personalised parenting education and support. This model enables individuals and communities to co-design parenting learning journeys that is context-aware, values-driven, and sustainable.

The three pathways:

1. Design your own
2. Design for your peers
3. Design for others

The Studies

01

Study 1: Scoping
Review of the
evidence (2024)

02

Study 2: Focus
Groups (2025)
[Framework
Workbook Part 1 -
Service Co-Design]

03

Study 3: Interviews
(2026) [Framework
Workbook Part 2 -
Parenting
Education]

04

Study 4: Survey
(2027) [inc.
bringing the
workbook together]

05

Study 5: Final
evidence review
(2027)

Study 1: The Scoping Review (2024)

Title: 'Inside Mum' – Designing for the two percent. A mixed methods scoping review of service co-design in parenting education with women who have experience of the criminal justice system.

Originality value: this is the first known scoping review of service co-design of parenting education for women who are criminal justice experienced.

Introduction: Around 2% of the total prison population in the UK are women who are also mothers. Their needs in terms of parenting services are still largely unknown.

Methodology: The scoping review method was used to explore the range of mixed methods literature that is currently available in terms of the use of service and co-design for mothers who have experience of prison, probation, and community sentencing.

Study 1: The Scoping Review 2024)

Results and findings: From the original search results ($n = 3,465$), only five articles fully met the search criteria in the peer reviewed literature. One article was found to have been undertaken in the UK. The thematic synthesis produced five overall themes from the broader literature search results ($n = 54$) which were **(1) Trauma informed (2) Empowerment (3) Attachment based (4) Gender responsiveness and (5) Peer support**. There were $n = 19$ outcomes and effects found in the quantitative studies of which the most positive were found to be parenting knowledge and skills, and parenting behaviour.



The Design Principles from the Evidence Base



These are also the principles for the focus groups and interviews

The Focus Groups – Agenda

You do not need to prepare anything before the groups.



1. 'Icebreaker' question
 2. General questions
 3. Provotype (early prototype) questions
-

The Icebreaker Question

If you could imagine a magical 'helper' for mum's, what would you ask them to take of?

You will be guided through a series of question. You will not be asked about your interest in the topics



The main questions

What are your views on the potential impact of service co-design on parenting education with this group?

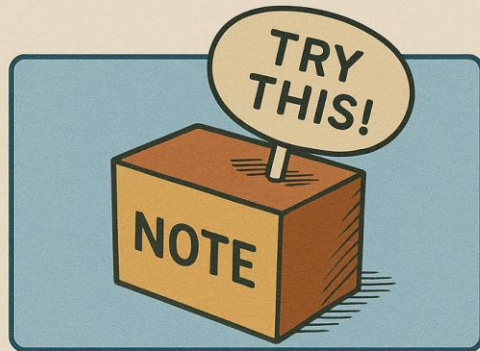
What would you like to see in the workbook?

How does this compare to other ways of creating such support?

What things need to be put in place for the future framework to be implemented?

TOP TIPS

PROVOTYPES



CATEGORY

Challenge assumptions
and prompt discussion

EASE OF USE	65
VERSATILITY	81
POPULARITY	72

What are provotypes?

Provotypes are *provoking prototypes*. Design concepts created not just to test how something works, but to spark discussion, challenge assumptions, and explore new possibilities.

Why they're important:

They help uncover hidden beliefs and tensions that traditional research might miss.

They make abstract ideas tangible, so people can respond to them more honestly.

They encourage creativity and debate, helping teams imagine bolder futures.

You will next be asked a series of questions about these early prototypes



TOP TIPS

JOURNEY MAPPING

A yellow wavy line representing a customer journey starts at a red location pin, passes a blue flag, goes through a speech bubble, and ends at a mountain peak with a person icon.

Journey mapping is a way to visualize the customer experience by outlining key stages and touchpoints.

Understand your customer's needs

COMPLEXITY	3
TIME REQUIRED	4
CREATIVITY BOOST	7

Provotype 1: Journey Map

[illegible]

Please note - there is a representative journey map currently in this pack. This is not the one that will be reviewed at the group



TOP TIPS

SERVICE BLUEPRINTS

Service blueprints are visual representations of the processes involved in delivering a service.

Map out your service

COMPLEXITY	3
TIME REQUIRED	4
CREATIVITY BOOST	8

Provotype 2: Service Blueprint

Stage	Customer Actions (Service User)	Frontstage (Visible Staff Actions)	Backstage (Invisible Staffers)	Support Processes / Systems	Evidence / Outcomes
Awareness & Access	Hears about programme from a Keyworker, or peer mentor	Staff introduce the programme in induction or wellbeing sessions	Coordination with uni managers for appropriate timing and		✓
Engagement & Enrolment	Expresses interest or curiosity	Facilitator provides a warm, trauma-informed introduction	Risk assessment, trauma screening, scheduling, allocation	Support systems	✓
Learning & Development	Signs up, attends an orientation or introductory meeting	Facilitator models empathy, uses strength-based language, co-creates session norms	Lesson planning, preparation of visual materials, review of participant needs	Support systems	✓
Practice & Reflection	Participates in interactive sessions (group or individual)	Facilitator provides guided reflection	Liaison with case managers and mental health teams to align	Coordination with external agencies, e.g. probation, social	✓
Transition & Reintegration	Completes course and creates a personal "Parenting Pathway Plan"	Staff hold a celebration or recognition event, certificates	Coordination with external agencies, e.g. probation, social	Support systems	✓

Please note - there is a representative service blueprint currently in this pack. This is not the one that will be reviewed at the group.



Example questions on Journey Mapping and Service Blueprints

- What stands out most to you about these maps, anything surprising or missing?
- Where are the key emotional highs and lows for the user, and what might be driving them?
- Where do mother's have to work hardest to get what they need?
- What would need to be true for the ideal experience to happen?
- Are there unintended consequences or feedback loops we should consider?

Provotype 3: User Stories

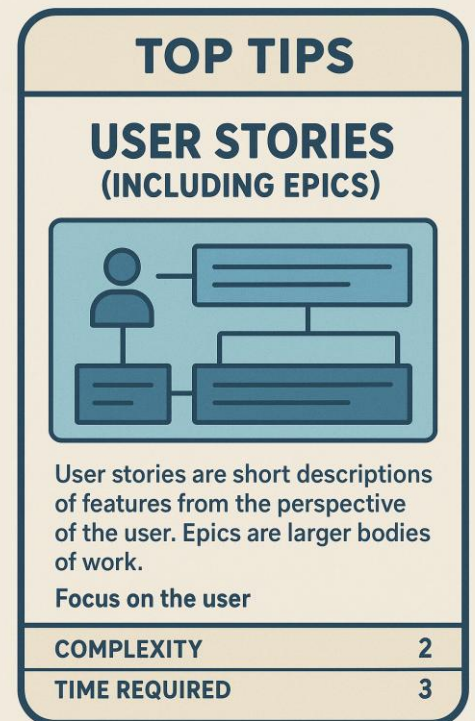
Please note - these are representative stories currently in this pack. This is not the one what will be reviewed at the group

As a woman who often feels unheard, I want staff and facilitators to actively listen and validate my views, so I feel respected as an expert in my own life.

As a mother, I want to contribute ideas to improve the program, so I can help shape services for other women like me.

As a participant, I want to create a personal parenting plan for when I leave, so I can feel hopeful and prepared for reuniting with my family.

As a mother, I want to celebrate milestones and achievements within the program, so I can recognise my growth and feel proud of my progress.





Provotype 4: Opportunity Mapping

TOP TIPS

OPPORTUNITY MAPPING

Opportunity mapping visually identifies and prioritizes areas to pursue.
Discover opportunities

COMPLEXITY	2
TIME REQUIRED	3
CREATIVITY BOOST	7

Need	Story insight	Opportunity Mapping	Potential design directions
Self-awareness and identity			
Reconnect with strengths and values	Many women experience shame and identity loss in custody	Strengths-based self-identity	Guided reflection tools; visual "strength maps"; peer affirmation exercises
Understand how childhood affects parenting	Cycles of trauma often go unexplored	Trauma-informed self-understanding	Life history mapping; attachment reflection journals; facilitator-led "then and now" sessions
Learn about trauma and regulation	Emotional dysregulation can trigger withdrawal or shutdown	Emotional literacy & self-regulation	Co-regulation techniques; visual aids explaining the stress response; grounding corners
Develop self-compassion	Guilt and shame can hinder learning	Psychological safety & self-acceptance	Compassion-focused activities; reframing exercises; "kindness to self" rituals
Set achievable goals	Overwhelm and low self-efficacy block motivation	Micro-goal setting	"Small wins" trackers; goal cards; progress recognition boards

Please note - there is a representative opportunity map currently in this pack. This is not the one that will be reviewed at the group



Do these opportunity areas sound true?



Which of these feels most important or urgent?



Are there any that don't quite fit or feel less relevant?



If we could only start with one improvement, which would make the biggest difference?



Are there voices or experiences missing from what has been captured so far?

Example questions on the user stories and opportunity mapping

Provotype 5: Empowering Behavioural Design

Please note - there is a representative
empowering behavioural design currently in this
pack. This is not the one that will be reviewed at
the group

EMPOWERING BEHAVIORAL CANVAS		
1. CONTEXT & ENVIRONMENT Where am I coming from, and what shaped my current journey? What kind of secure or contained environment have I experienced? What were the routines, boundaries, and relationships that shaped daily life there? What parts of that environment felt safe, and what parts felt limiting?	2. EMOTIONAL LANDSCAPE How do I feel in my current life, and what emotions drive me? What emotions come up when I think about my past, present, and future? What helps me regulate or understand those emotions? What emotions would I like to experience more often (e.g. peace, purpose, confidence)?	3. STRENGTHS & RESOURCES What has helped me survive, adapt, and grow? What personal strengths helped me get through tough times? Who or what gives me energy, support, or hope? What skills, creativity, or insights have come from my lived experience? What would it look like to use those strengths intentionally?
4. BARRIERS & TRIGGERS What gets in the way, and how can I respond differently? What situations or thoughts make it harder to act the way I want to? What triggers feelings of powerlessness or mistrust? What small actions or boundaries could protect my wellbeing in those moments?	5. MOTIVATIONS & MEANING What gives me purpose, and what matters deeply to me? What kind of life or contribution feels meaningful? Who am I becoming beyond the label of Secure environment? What vision or values can guide my next steps?	6. DESIRED BEHAVIOR OR CHANGE What new behavior or habit could help me move toward that vision? What small, repeatable behavior can I begin practicing? How will I know when I'm succeeding (what will look or feel different)? How does this new behavior reflect the woman I want to be?
7. DESIGN FOR SUCCESS How can I make it easier, safer, and more rewarding to grow? What cues or reminders could help me stay on track? How can I make the new behavior feel rewarding that I want to do?	8. EMPOWERMENT & IMPACT How can my growth create ripples beyond me? How can sharing my story or strength empower others? What kind of systems or supports would help more women like me?	9. REFLECTION SPACE Today I recognise... A moment of courage: _____ A lesson I'm carrying: _____ A step I'm taking next: _____ A word that describes my growth today: _____

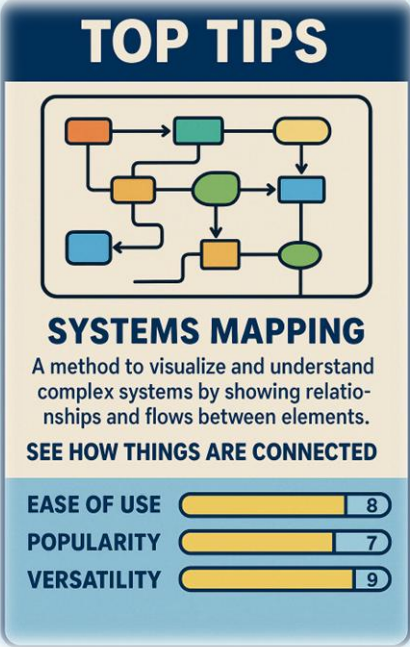


TOP TIPS	
EMPOWERING BEHAVIOURAL DESIGN	
Empowering behavioural design encourages positive changes in actions	
Make it easy	
COMPLEXITY	2
TIME REQUIRED	3
CREATIVITY BOOST	7

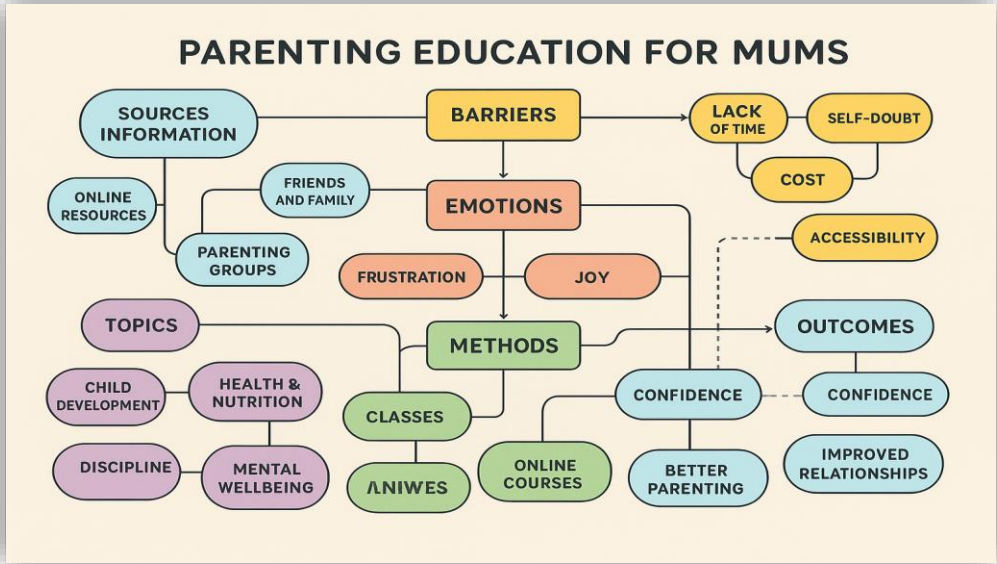


Example questions about the empowering Behavioural Design

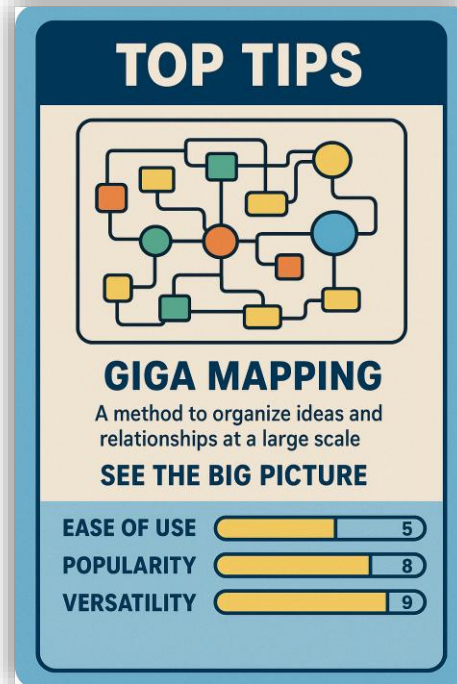
- What would make this design even more empowering?
- How could this better build on strengths or resources?
- What small change would make you feel even more confident about its use?
- What might make this more supportive without being intrusive or directive?
- What would it look like if it fully enabled mothers (and their children) to thrive?



Prototypes 6 Systems Map



Please note - there is a representative systems map currently in this pack. This is not the one that will be reviewed at the group



Prototype 6 Giga Map



Please note - there is a representative giga map currently in this pack. This is not the one that will be reviewed at the group



Example questions on the Giga Map

What is your first impression when you look at this map?

Does this map reflect what it's like to be a mum engaging with parenting education or support?

Do the relationships between things (e.g., barriers, supports, emotions) feel accurate?

How does this map make you feel when you look at it?

What's the most important thing that's missing or needs changing?

As a thank you

- after the groups, the provotypes will be updated to **include your voice.**

You will be given early access before everyone else.

* this will be under the terms of a creative commons licence for non-commercial and educational use

References

Breuer, E., Remond, M., Lighton, S., Passalacqua, J., Galouzis, J., Stewart, K.A. and Sullivan, E., (2021), The needs and experiences of mothers while in prison and post-release: a rapid review and thematic synthesis. *Health & justice*, 9, pp.1-19.

Vink, J., Wetter-Edman, K., Edvardsson, B. and Tronvoll, B., (2016), Understanding the influence of the co-design process on well-being. *Serv Des*.

Blogs

Designing Justice



The Service Co-Design Journey



Designing for Futures

Get in contact with your host

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