

# Inequalities in health care provision: the relationship between contemporary policy and contemporary practice

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## HEALTH AND NURSING POLICY ISSUES

### Inequalities in health care provision: the relationship between contemporary policy and contemporary practice in maternity services in England

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HART A. & LOCKEY R. (2002) *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 37(5), 485–493  
Inequalities in health care provision: the relationship between contemporary policy and contemporary practice in maternity services in England  
Aim. The project *Addressing Inequalities in Health: new directions in midwifery*

### Inequalities in health care provision: the relationship between contemporary policy and contemporary practice in maternity services in England

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#### Abstract

**Aim.** The project *Addressing Inequalities in Health: new directions in midwifery education and practice* (Hart et al. 2001) was commissioned by the English National Board for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting (ENB). Here, we draw on those research findings to consider current midwifery policy and practice in England. **Background.** Little guidance on providing equality of care exists for midwives. The Code of Conduct [United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting (UKCC) 1992] makes no specific requirement for midwives to address issues of inequalities of health in their practice. Recent policy documents emphasize the need to work towards reducing inequalities and to target practice to 'disadvantaged clients' without giving guidelines on how to identify and care for target groups. **Methods.** In-depth studies of midwifery education and service provision were conducted in three very different parts of England. Three months of fieldwork were undertaken at each site, comprising a series of interviews with midwifery educators, managers, students, midwives and service users. Focus groups

were also held and observation of classroom sessions and midwifery practice undertaken. Findings. A lack of clear and specific strategies concerning inequalities in health was evident at managerial level. Patchy knowledge of current policy was also evident amongst practising midwives. Specific projects with disadvantaged clients usually resulted from a particular midwife's personal interest or evident local need. All midwives emphasized the importance of 'equality of care'. How this was operationalized varied, and 'individualized' or 'woman-centred' care was assumed to encompass the concept. In the few examples where care was systematically targeted in accordance with policy directives, the midwife's public health role was increased. Conclusion. In the absence of a co-ordinated strategic vision driven by managers, practitioners find difficulty in prioritizing care and targeting resources to disadvantaged clients in line with policy directives. Tensions between policy and practice in the care of 'disadvantaged' women clearly exist. Successful implementation of policy at practice level needs: commitment from managers; clarity of purpose in documentation; and provision of specific targets for practitioners. However, the latter should remain flexible enough for the delivery of care to be appropriate and sensitive to individual needs.

[Download Article](#)

**More resilience research articles and related content:**



## **Watch our workshops: how to do community co-research on health equity.**

Created as part of the ongoing Community Solutions for Health Equity project that Boingboing Foundation are proudly part of, we are pleased to share recordings of a series of workshops held recently in Blackpool. These workshops are free resources to be taken advantage of by any community members or organisations looking for a beginner's guide to developing the research skills and knowledge needed to explore health inequalities in coastal areas.



## **An introduction to the Research Ready Communities pilot**

For the past year and a half Boingboing has been working on a Research Ready Communities pilot project in Blackpool alongside the National Institute for Health Research as part of their Under-served Communities programme. Typically, much of the funding for health research in the UK goes to universities in London, Oxford and Cambridge, but health research is needed the most in places like Blackpool, where the harmful impacts of health inequalities are worst felt.



## **Resilience Revolution – Blackpool HeadStart**

The Resilience Revolution has delivered an extensive programme of lasting change with disadvantaged young people in the town of Blackpool, through a successful £10.4 million Big Lottery HeadStart funding bid. Their work is based on research into resilience by Boingboing and the Centre of Resilience for Social Justice.



## **Our Academic Publications**

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This page presents an archive of selected published works from the Boingboing, Resilience Revolution and CRSJ community. This includes key academic papers, submissions of evidence and a few books relevant to the Boingboing approach to resilience.



## **Cross-cultural investigation of resilience**

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This research project will investigate whether the Resilience Framework operates similarly or differently across diverse contexts in a cross-cultural study, and adapt the Resilience Framework for non-Western life orientations in multiple languages.



## **Our schools-based resilience projects**

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Our schools-based resilience research adapts the Resilience Framework for use in schools and helps schools make resilient moves across the whole school community. Many different types of school are working with us on this.



## Can resilience be measured?

Can resilience be measured? Finding adequate and good ways of measuring is important because we would like to track the effectiveness of resilient building approaches in daily practice, to make sure that people benefit from our interventions, check the quality of our work and continue developing our interventions.

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research



## The Research Ready Communities pilot continued

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## **Community Report – Climate Change and Mental Health**

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A full summary of findings from the research project 'Climate change and mental health; A co-produced study with young people in Blackpool'.



### **Nothing about us without us: civic activism as a mental health intervention**

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Through this research a team of co-researchers from different generations, professions and backgrounds will co-create knowledge regarding the role of innovative 'glocal' civic activism as a mechanism to strengthen young people's mental health.



### **United we stand Film: Youth perspectives on developing resilience to drought in South Africa**

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United we stand is a policy briefing paper produced by all the team members involved in the co-productive research project led by Professor Angie Hart on Youth perspectives on developing resilience to drought in South Africa.



## Co-production in promoting resilience – what does this mean for schools?

Co-production is a value-based approach that views people who use a service as assets with important knowledge and skills. It harnesses this experience, knowledge and skill to promote positive change, and design, produce and deliver better services.



## Resilience to re-offending: young men overcoming adversity.

This practitioner research combines support work with young people who have experienced challenging times and the Resilience Framework. By examining the mechanisms that promoted resilience amongst young men who were offending, the study took the Resilience Framework and applied it to the data collected on the young men's experiences.

Resilience Framework (Children & Young People) Oct 2015 – adapted from Hart & Blincoe 2007 <a href="http://www.boingboing.org.uk">www.boingboing.org.uk</a>					
SPECIFIC APPROACHES	BASICS	BELONGING	LEARNING	COPING	CORE SELF
	Good enough housing	Find somewhere for the child/YP to belong	Make school/college life work as well as possible	Understanding boundaries and keeping within them	Instil a sense of hope
	Enough money to live	Help child/YP understand their place in the world		Being brave	Support the child/YP to understand other people's feelings
	Being safe	Tap into good influences	Engage mentors for children/YP	Solving problems	
		Keep relationships going		Putting on rose-tinted glasses	Help the child/YP to know her/himself
	Access & transport	The more healthy relationships the better	Map out career or life plan	Fostering their interests	Help the child/YP take responsibility for her/himself
	Healthy diet	Talk what you can from relationships where there is some hope	Help the child/YP to organise her/himself	Calming down & self-soothing	
	Exercise and fresh air	Out together people the child/YP can count on		Remember tomorrow is another day	Foster their talents
	Enough sleep	Responsibilities & obligations	Highlight achievements	Lean on others when necessary	There are tried and tested treatments for specific problems, use them
	Play & leisure	Make sense of where child/YP has come from	Develop life skills	Have a laugh	
	Living free from prejudice & discrimination	Predict a good experience of someone or something new			
		Make friends and mix with other children/YPs			
NOBLE TRUTHS					
ACCEPTING		CONSERVING	COMMITMENT	ENLISTING	

## The Boingboing Resilience Framework

The Resilience Framework is a handy table that summarises ‘what works’ when supporting children and young people’s resilience according to the Resilience Research base. The Resilience Framework forms a cornerstone of our research and practice. On this page we have pulled together lots of useful links so you can find out all about the Resilience Framework.



### **Communication between autistic and non-autistic speakers: Gemma Williams introduces her fellowship research**

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Gemma is an autistic Early Career Researcher based at the Centre of Resilience for Social Justice, University of Brighton and a Boingboing volunteer. In this blog Gemma talks about her PhD research, and what she plans to do over the coming year of her fellowship under Prof. Angie Hart’s mentorship.



### **How can patients, the public and health professionals work better together?**

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In this blog Debbie Hatfield, postdoctoral fellow with Boingboing and the Centre of Resilience for Social Justice, talks about her research and what she hopes it will achieve. Debbie’s work includes promoting and developing her PhD findings which looked at patient and public engagement and involvement for commissioning health services.





## **Resilience among young people in a community affected by drought**

The expertise of young South Africans in coping with drought is being harnessed for this co-productive research project. Our team is working with partners to understand what enables young people to withstand, adapt to, resist or challenge these impacts.



## **The Imagine Programme**

The Imagine Programme brings together different research projects working across universities and their local communities. Using the new knowledge we gather, we are imagining how communities might be different. We are researching, and experimenting with different forms of community-building that ignite imagination about the future and help to build resilience.



Written by  
Martha, Loretta, Sarah,

## **Can kinship carers benefit from learning about resilience?**

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This is a Collaborative Action Research project using Photo-elicitation to represent kinship carers experiences of trying to use Resilient Therapy and individual interviews with children to find out what helps them through difficult times.