

## Poster – #EIE2021

### Use of technology to stimulate continuous reflection on treatment integrity in child protection.

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#### *Research aim*

Exploration of a digital product to stimulate continuous reflection on treatment integrity by professionals, in order to improve the quality of youth care.

#### *Methods*

In the first semester 20-21, twenty 3<sup>rd</sup> year design students of Communication and Multimedia Design at AUAS worked together with eight child protection professionals to explore a digital tool to stimulate **continuous reflection** on the application of intensive system-based case management (ISC) (the organisations core method). The students used a design approach to gather insights and data on the process and possible solutions.

**Research through Design (RtD)** is an approach to conducting scholarly research that employs the methods, practices, and processes of design practice with the main intention of generating new knowledge. RtD often uses *design artefacts* that look and feel like finished products. These artefacts are used to test a hypothesis and/or encite or provoke discussion. Carefully scripted tests, observations and critique from end users are used to gather insights and data into the problem the artefact will solve.

In the exploration, each of the students created a series of three realistic working **prototypes** of speculative “reflection apps” as artefacts. The functionality of the first iteration was based on desk research and early stakeholder interviews. Subsequent iterations of the prototype incorporated end user critique. The final iteration was a user-centered specification of an “ideal” continuous reflection process, supported by a possible digital application, based on reflection needs and wants of Child Care professionals.

#### *Key findings*

- Design Thinking and Research through Design is a useful and fun approach to research in child protection practice. The method quickly identifies main pain points and opportunities for improvement in the daily routine of professionals.
- Students and child protection professionals jointly conclude that a digital reflection tool would improve continuous reflection. Junior and senior child protection professionals gave the students extensive feedback on the prototypes. They would use the final iteration of the app because of the useful features.
- Child protection professionals want to reflect before and after an interview with children or families, using a short, tailored checklist configurable to treatment goals and -phase per family; they want to add personal goals in the list of questions, based visual insight into personal progress, and share reflection with peers and seniors to enhance their learning in the use of ISC. Especially young, inexperienced child protection professionals say they need the tool and desire the incorporation with the organizations training program on ISC.

- The existing reflection method in the organization, based on an ISC treatment integrity instrument on paper is helpful in learning how to work with ISC, but labor-intensive. There is a need for a simple mobile tool that supports the primary work process (notebook, to-do list and address book). Child protection professionals **would definitely** use a reflection tool if it supported the primary work process.

### *Discussion*

- Explorative research with prototypes that look and feel like finished products carry the inherent promise that the product will be built soon. Do we have to fulfil this promise and build the reflection tool? How do we sell our results to our stakeholders?
- Research through Design is a useful and fun approach for exploration and data gathering. Doing it right requires design knowledge and skills. Not everybody has 20 design students available. How do scientists and researchers create working relationships with designers? Or should scientists become designers themselves?