

# Knowledge Management and Collaboration Systems in NDPB organisations.

Connecting stakeholders to improve knowledge share, collaboration and service delivery with tImNexus Knowledge Services.

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**“Our new knowledge management solution has not only transformed the way we work as a team and as individuals, but has also enabled us to create a ‘centre of excellence’”**

Jenny Collieson, Head of Information, National Academy for Parenting Practitioners

**Implementation:**

TImNexus - Knowledge Services

**Service description:**

Consultation was provided at a high level to map the knowledge 'footprint' of the organisation. Once this was understood analysis was carried out to determine the business issues driving the need for the knowledge solution.

System analysis documented the system to be built in detail prior to development and deployment of the solution.

**Solution description:**

The solution is a web-enabled software system designed to meet the knowledge needs of all the stakeholders within the sector the National Academy for Parenting Practitioners serves.

The solution features knowledge creation, capture, and transfer mechanisms along with specialised workflow systems that enable the unique business processes of the organisation.

**Technical:**

The system, titled 'The Toolkit', was a customized solution based on TImNexus Knowledge Objects Library (KOL). KOL implements Microsoft SQL Server 2005, Microsoft Windows Server 2003, with a code base developed on the .NET 2 framework.

# Connecting stakeholders to improve knowledge share, collaboration and service delivery

The National Academy for Parenting Practitioners (the Academy) was set up in 2007, a year after the Government announced its plan to establish a national academy for parenting as part of the Respect agenda, to improve anti-social behaviour in young people.

A consortium including the Family and Parenting Institute, Parenting UK and King's College London was awarded a grant to set up the Academy, which is now established as a separately constituted charitable company.

The Academy's work to transform the quality and size of the parenting workforce across England focuses on three main areas of activity: research, workforce development and knowledge exchange.

## A unique organisation with crucial information to share

The Academy is a groundbreaking organisation, the first of its kind in the world to link training, research, practical support and information for parenting practitioners.

Evidence from the UK and abroad shows that truly effective work with parents can transform the lives of both children and their families. The aim of the Academy is to make sure that the help that parents receive is soundly based on evidence of what works, for which families, and under which circumstances.

Head of Information at the Academy, Jenny Collieson said: "Local authorities and service managers commissioning training for their practitioners need to be able to obtain good information and make an informed choice about the range of parenting programmes available that best meet the different needs of parents.

An online 'Commissioning Toolkit of Parenting Programmes' that included consistent information about the quality and effectiveness of programmes available in England was an important resource for us to create."

## Building the Commissioning Toolkit

Working to the Academy's specific requirements for a bespoke solution, software specialists TLM Nexus set about designing and building a web-based resource which would not only provide guidance on parenting programmes and approaches but could be used as a tool to help programme developers improve the quality and evidence base for their programmes.

## Creating an evidence-based tool for the parenting workforce

The Academy's parenting programme research team developed an official measure for evaluating the quality of programmes – the Parenting Programme Evaluation Tool (PPET). The PPET uses objective criteria developed after an intensive review of the international literature. It allows locally developed programmes to be rated according to the same high standards as well-known international programmes.

The PPET is comprised of four main elements relating to the target group for a particular intervention, the quality and theoretical framework of the programme, how it is implemented (training requirements for practitioners), and evaluation of its outcomes – the evidence that the programme works with its target families.

TLM Nexus developed an online submission system based on the PPET elements and criteria to be completed electronically by programme developers which allowed all relevant programme information to be sent directly to the Toolkit's administration system - where it could be published onto the live database after checking and editing in the Toolkit workflow. Programmes published on the database then undergo the Academy's rigorous evaluation process and TLM Nexus designed a workflow to support this.

## A user friendly and accessible solution

It was important that all programmes are categorised using the same PPET terms and descriptors and that the way the information is displayed about each programme in the database reflects these categories and terminology. The information returned via the submission form is extremely detailed and complex but one of the key requirements of the Toolkit was that it presented information in an accessible and user-focused way.

The new database [www.commissioningtoolkit.org](http://www.commissioningtoolkit.org) was officially launched via a link on the Academy's website in December 2008. It is free to use both to submit and search for programmes but users are asked to register in order that the Academy can monitor usage. It currently holds details on over 100 parenting programmes, 20 of which have been Academy-rated (evaluated and scored for their quality across the key criteria).

Usage statistics show that the database has received more visits each month since its launch and feedback from commissioners is positive. Linda Murphy, a Parenting Strategy Manager for the City of York Council said: "Before, when we wanted to plug a gap in provision, finding the right programme to support local parents could sometimes feel a bit 'hit and miss' – it was difficult to know what was available, which parents the programmes were suited to and what they aimed to do. Having all the information together in one place gives us a really useful overview of what's on offer. We can then look at each possibility in more depth and use the information to talk to parents in order to identify the programme that best complements local skills and existing services."

## Future projects planned to continue the Academy's progression

Building on their knowledge of the Academy's mission and core business, TLM Nexus has been commissioned to develop a new intranet system - an internal business platform that will support a range of applications including a contacts database, training management module, and issues management system for logging enquiries, requests and complaints.

Jenny concluded: "The new intranet will integrate with the Toolkit database and create an enterprise application that will both significantly enhance the internal communications across our many regions and sites rely on, plus improve our overall stakeholder relationship management."

For more information on the National Academy of Parenting Practitioners visit [www.parentingacademy.org](http://www.parentingacademy.org).

## Technical

The system, titled 'The Commissioning Toolkit', was a custom built solution based on Microsoft SQL Server 2005, Microsoft Windows Server 2003, with a code base developed on the .NET 2 framework.

For more information on TLM Nexus' work, please visit [www.tlmnexus.com](http://www.tlmnexus.com) or call 01273 384 250.