



Kailo Framework Resources

How does Kailo work to improve adolescent mental health?



Overview: How does Kailo work to improve adolescent mental health? The developmental realist-informed evaluation protocol

Purpose of this ‘Plan of Action’

This paper sets out “plan of action” to explore how Kailo is working. The Kailo research team plan to do a “developmental realist-informed evaluation”. This means they will focus on exploring how and why Kailo works, for whom, and in what ways. Realist-informed evaluations are a popular method because they go beyond just asking “has this worked” and are interested in what is happening below the surface to make something work in a specific context. For example, the evaluation will look at both expected and surprising outcomes of Kailo. It will look at how Kailo has worked in Newham and Northern Devon.

Research Aims

The research will focus on understanding:

- How and why Kailo works
- How people feel about Kailo and what conditions help it work best
- What is the result of Kailo and what changes are seen in local communities

Methods

The researchers will use a range of methods to understand how and why Kailo works. They will talk to Kailo leaders, community members and young people; they will read other research which is similar to Kailo; they will review documents and records about Kailo; and they will attend Kailo meetings and make notes about what they see happening. They will then combine all this information to come up with a set of ideas about how Kailo works, called an Initial Programme Theory.

The researchers will then test how accurate their Initial Programme Theory is by talking with more community members and observing more meetings. After this, they are likely to change and improve their Initial Programme Theory.



Summary of the ‘Plan of Action’

In summary, the plan of action involves three stages:

- 1) **Creating** an Initial Programme Theory (using interviews, meeting notes and other similar research)
- 2) **Testing** the theory (using interviews and observing meetings).
- 3) **Changing** and improving the theory.

The new Programme Theory will then be used to improve how Kailo is rolled out in new places in the future.

References

Kennedy L, March A, Harris J *et al*. How does Kailo work to improve adolescent mental health? A developmental realist evaluation protocol [version 1; peer review: 3 approved with reservations]. Wellcome Open Res 2024, 9:547 (<https://doi.org/10.12688/wellcomeopenres.22946.1>)