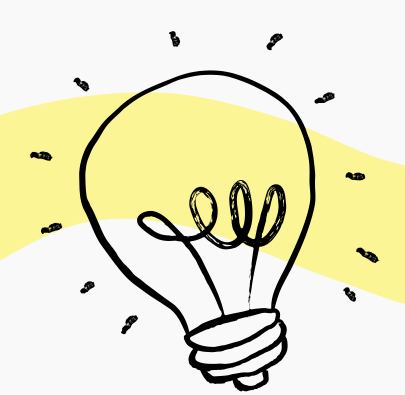


Involving children and young people in understanding mental health research.

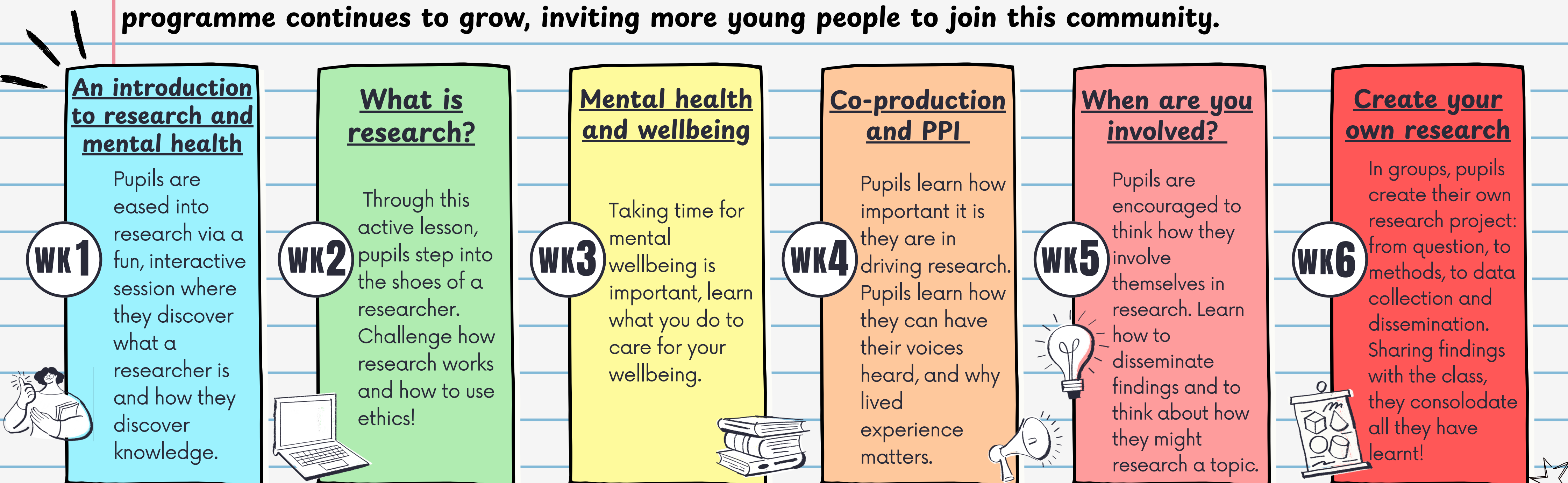


Author: Jamie Telford

Background

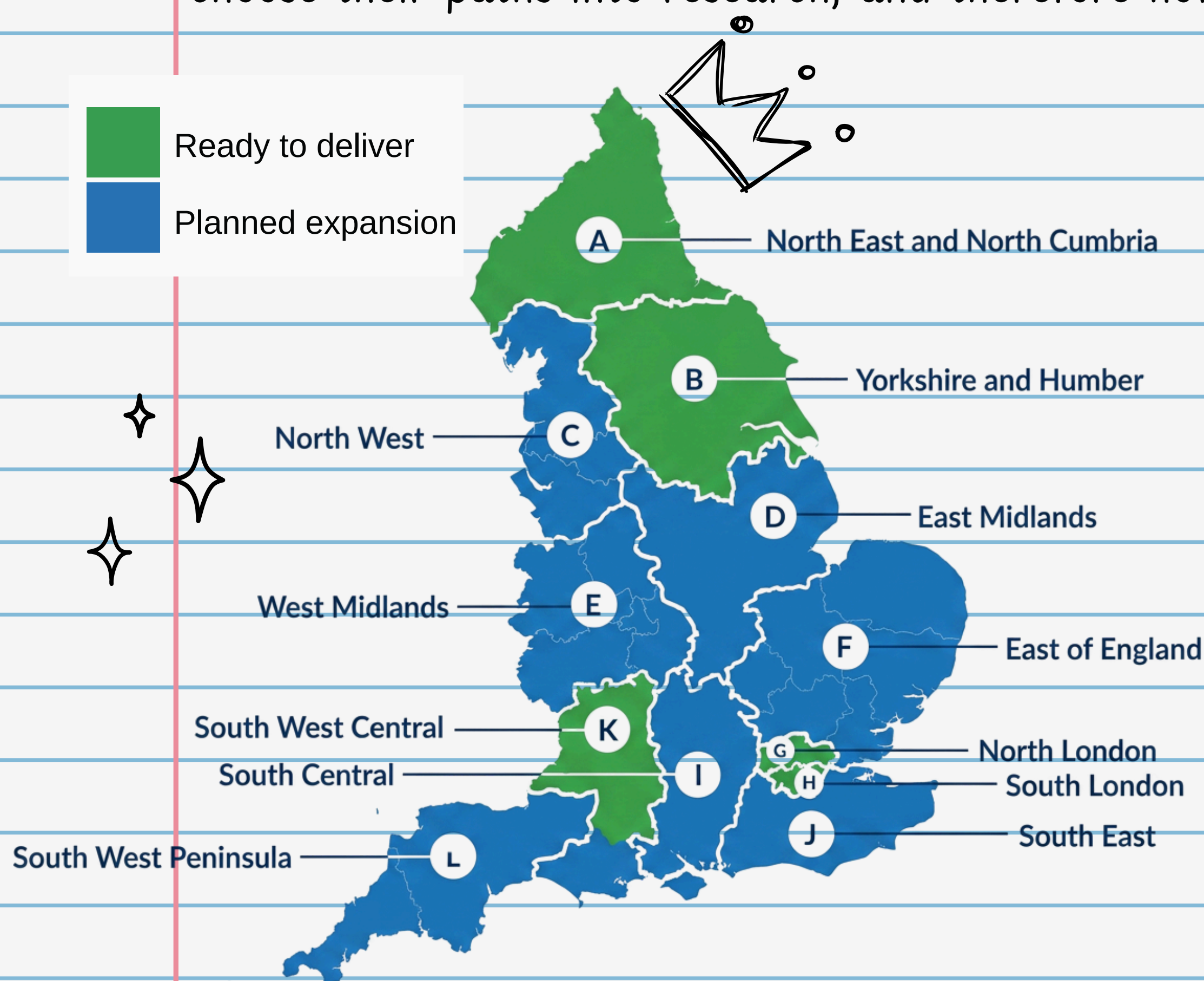


The Child Oriented Mental Health Innovation Collaborative (COMIC) received funding from Yorkshire and Humber Regional Research Delivery Network (Y&H RRDN) to create a programme to introduce local communities to research. The **Research Ready School (RRS) programme** is **delivered over a period of 5/6 weeks in bite-size lessons** designed to **challenge** and **inspire** pupils culminating in organic research proposals investigating what has intrigued the class. **Having been successfully delivered to 3 primary schools, the RRS programme continues to grow, inviting more young people to join this community.**



Results and outcomes

The RRS programme has benefitted both communities and research team, through this programme we have developed our Young Person's Advisory Network (YPAN) further, inviting CYP from underserved communities to **use their voice** and advise on our research through PPI and co-production methods. Often being tokenistic in research, PPIE is given a true platform via the programme as it reciprocates but adopts an environment of sustainable engagement. Furthermore, by **integrating these topics into the curriculum**, schools can provide a holistic educational experience that **equips students with the knowledge and skills** necessary to manage their mental health effectively. By **identifying lived experience** children and young people have the ability to choose their paths into research, and therefore how research can benefit them.



National Roll Out

The RRS programme is now being rolled out to **5 additional RRDN's**. Providing training to deliver the programme, with **flexibility to alter the content** to suit the research needs in their region. Taking the already proved format for RRS, research teams can provide local communities the same benefits that have already been shown in established RRS's whilst gaining community trust to partake in their research. By end of the financial year 2026, the RRS programme will be **embedded into at least 12 more schools**, thereby exposing at least **300 children** and young people to research improving awareness and understanding. This will also grow the COMIC YPAN exponentially to represent more diverse populations.