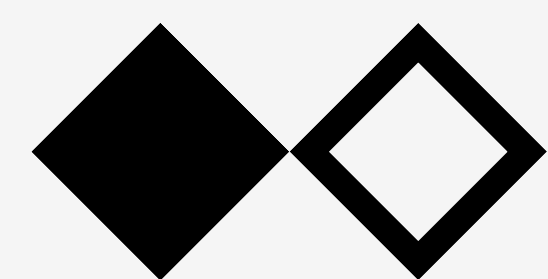


How to: Problem re-framing



Isla's Story

Scotland's Independent Care Review used what it heard from real children and young people to create **composite stories** about the care system. These are stories about fictional people, made up from experiences which actually happened.

Isla's story is one of these, and has been used in the example below.

A: The 5 Whys of the System

Outline the specific problem

We can't retain enough long-term foster carers because of burnout.

...and *why* is this a problem?

Children in care are continually experiencing lots of disruption and difficulties in their homes.

...and *why* is this a problem?

The disruption has a significant impact on school attendance and mental health.

...and *why* is this a problem?

Children in care are less likely to reach their potential and lead happy, fulfilled, healthy lives.

...and *why* is this a problem?

It can lead to an ongoing cycle of families 'stuck' in the care system.

What does this mean for your problem?

We must factor in mental health as a whole system issue.

B: The 5 Whys of the Problem

Outline the specific problem

We can't retain enough long-term foster carers.

...and *why* does this happen?

Foster carers only join us for an average of 3 years because they burn out.

...and *why* does this happen?

The first year of fostering is especially intense for new carers.

...and *why* does this happen?

There isn't enough support for new foster families to bond.

...and *why* does this happen?

Foster care support is quite generic and based on outdated resources.

What does this mean for your problem?

We need to prioritise tackling the problems around support for foster carers.

Using problem re-framing

What it's for

If your Problem Statements don't feel strong or clear enough, you could try the 5 Whys.

These can help tease out **the problems underneath the problem**. You may already know these quite well, but it often helps to get these written down simply and clearly.

How it's used

Take an issue, problem or challenge and follow the **5 Why questions**. **Column A** is about the impact on the bigger system—and why it needs to be solved. **Column B** is about the problem itself and why it's happening.

Keep going until you think you have got to the problems you really need to (and can) focus on.

When to use it

Use this tool at the start of the design process, and keep coming back to it throughout.

Keep checking if your responses are still the right ones!

Top Tip

Use the re-framing tool as a group activity, but try it individually or smaller groups first. You'll find either that everyone is very clear what your problem is, or that there are different perspectives and angles. Either of these can be useful!