

Intro 30 seconds

This is a short film to provide an overview of the evaluation of the Little Orange Book; an information resource given to parents of young children in Newcastle and Gateshead. The evaluation was funded by (add funder) and was conducted by a team of academics and researchers from across the Northeast (add our names) between Jan and July of 2022. The film will provide an overview of the Little Orange Book, the evaluation and key findings and how these will be used to further develop the Little Orange Book.

LOB Film – script from David Jones

The Little Orange Book was produced in 2016 following evidence that a number of parents/carers were presenting to their GP practice with common ailments in children aged 0-5 years that could be managed at home with advice and guidance. Local research showed that attendance at A&E for these problems could be reduced by almost half if parents/carers had access to better, clearer information that they could refer to.

We worked with colleagues in secondary care, primary care, health visiting, and with parents and carers to create a document that outlined common acute illnesses – how to manage them at home, how long to keep your child off school / nursery and when to seek further help from their local GP or urgent care services. The topics are labelled with symbols to help people find the information and there is a simple green, amber, red colour guide to indicate the severity of each condition.

The Little Orange Book is available as hard copy that is given out to all new parents by either their midwife, health visitor or GP. It has also been shared with accident and emergency services and professionals have been encouraged to share the book with parents/carers presenting to urgent care services. It is also available online.

The book has also been shared with primary schools across Newcastle and Gateshead and schools have been encouraged to use the book as a reference guide when children fall ill throughout the school day.

How we conducted the evaluation 1 minute approx. 2 para

The evaluation adopted a mixed method exploratory sequential design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) and included two main phases. Phase One consisted of an online survey and feedback cards to allow participants to provide a broad overview of their use and experiences of using the LOB. 128 people responded who were split into three groups:

1. Survey respondents who **received and used** the LOB (82 respondents)
2. Survey respondents who **received and did not use** the LOB (24 respondents)
3. Survey respondents **who did not receive** the LOB (22 respondents)

1,970 brief feedback cards were sent to 197 health and community organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead.

Phase two involved 16 audio-recorded individual interviews with parents and carers from the Northeast of England, thirteen who were recruited from the online survey and another three via word of mouth.

The findings from both phases of the evaluation are integrated and we're going to talk about them in a chronological journey, beginning with how the LOB is distributed, used and parent/carer views about the content and format.

Key findings 2.5 minutes approx. 2-3 para

Distribution of The Little Orange Book

Our evaluation found the majority of LOBs were distributed via health appointments with midwives, health visitors and GPs. There were variations reported in the availability of the LOB, with some participants being offered this multiple times and others having not received it at all. There were instances of the LOB being shared outside the Newcastle and Gateshead area due to recommendations from parents/carers. Whilst some of those who had received a version of the LOB described having a useful explanation when this was first provided, others reported receiving no information about how to use the LOB.

How are parents/carers using The Little Orange Book?

One potential population where the LOB may have a significant impact were first-time parent/carers. Those who have multiple children often reported that they were less likely to use this resource due to less anxiety about managing symptoms of childhood illness. A large percentage of those who received/accessed the LOB indicated that it increased their confidence to care for their unwell child/ren. Parent/carers reported the LOB helped them to identify potential causes of symptoms and provided suggestions for management through monitoring, self-care and/ or seeking advice from healthcare services. However, this was not context dependent, and its value was described as complementing parental experience, intuition, and judgement

Over half of parent/carers reported that the information in the book made them more likely to access non-emergency services and less likely to access emergency services when their child/ren showed signs of childhood illnesses and complaints.

Most participants viewed the LOB as trustworthy and reliable due to the association with the NHS, however some questioned whether this was solely provided to prevent healthcare use. There were some concerns about ensuring that the content of the LOB is kept up to date due to risks associated with circulation of outdated information.

Overall, the design and format of the LOB was viewed positively. Of note was the traffic light system, which was used to understand the severity of symptoms/complaints, and images, which conveyed information in an accessible way and provided reassurance. However, the visual content could be more inclusive relating to different ethnicities, particularly relating to identifying different rashes. The use of visual 'tabs' to separate conditions was welcomed and could be further developed by use of physical "tabs" as an index divider to aid navigation through the LOB.

There was variation regarding preference for a digital or hardcopy format. Whilst there are some key advantages with digital resources, it was important to ensure that these would not act as a replacement for hard copies.

Recommendations from the study

We could show these:

- 1) To review and develop a strategic approach to disseminating and raising awareness of the purpose of the LOB across Newcastle and Gateshead. Emphasis should be placed on initial dissemination and explanation by community health services. Priority should be given to first-time parent/carers and those with a large gap between children.
- 2) When disseminating the LOB, professionals should ensure that parent/carers understand the LOB is to support their existing knowledge and parental judgement and instincts.
- 3) To provide and/or raise awareness of the LOB as part of universal and targeted provision (such as health visitors and midwives).
- 4) To ensure that all key services (health and education), who are the point of contact for parent/carers regarding their child/ren's health, are aware of, regularly updated on and are encouraged to signpost the LOB.
- 5) To continue to include visual content, in particular the traffic light system and images.
- 6) To improve the diversity/inclusivity of images, particularly in photographs used to show complaints (such as rashes), to better include individuals of minority ethnic origin.
- 7) Decisions about adding more detail/depth to the hardcopy LOB should be treated with caution. One solution would be add further detail to a digital resource, which the hardcopy could signpost parent/carers to, if they require more information.
- 8) Future versions of the LOB would benefit from a clearly identified version number, date of publication and a disclaimer that the content was correct at the time of publication

Challenges

The evaluation was challenging in a number of ways.

Firstly, the 6 month time frame was challenging and led to a request for this to be extended.

Secondly, recruitment to the survey was difficult. We invested in producing fliers and posters that were posted to over (add number) health, education and community organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead. This only generated (add number) of responses and was exceptionally expensive.

What we found helped most was sharing via online sources, including newsletters / GP surgeries and a final boost was achieved by paying for a FB add.

This is something we feel should be considered by others conducting similar evaluations.

Benefits

LOB File – script from Nik/Lauren

Copies of the Little Orange Book have been circulated widely across Newcastle and Gateshead. You can obtain a copy of the latest version of the book from your GP practice, health visitor, midwife, your local A&E department and from children and family hubs. The Little Orange Book is also available online on both the Newcastle and Gateshead Local Offers and the Healthier Together Website.

Parents and carers are encouraged to refer to the contents of the book which provides them with advice and guidance on how to manage common ailments and

when to seek further help from health care professionals. However, if a parent/carer is still unsure about their child's symptoms then please do contact your GP in the first instance.

LOB draft script – CHWN sections

Reason for the evaluation – 2 mins/2-3 paragraphs

Evaluating impact is invaluable in any new initiative to understand its value and also identify areas for further improvement.

An initial evaluation of the Little Orange Book was carried out in 2018, which included health professionals across different services as well as parents in Newcastle and Gateshead. The evaluation showed that professionals and parents were highly supportive of the Little Orange Book and key findings demonstrated it was helpful in increasing understanding of common childhood illnesses. It also helped parents make informed decisions about when self-care is appropriate and when to seek further advice from health professionals and services such as A&E.

This first phase evaluation recommended that an app was introduced to support the paper-based and online pdf version, that the content was updated, that different language versions were developed and also that the Little Orange Book needed to be distributed more widely across the region. It was also recommended that further evaluations were undertaken once use of the Little Orange Book was more established within the Newcastle and Gateshead areas.

The Child Health and Wellbeing Network covers the regional geography of the North East and North Cumbria and has a specific remit to share good practice, so was well placed to support some of the recommendations highlighted in phase 1 evaluation. Both myself and David Jones were founding core members of the Network. I'd been keen to spread the implementation of the Little Orange Book into my local Tees Valley area and suggested the Network could play a key role in this. The Network has supported the roll out through its large network of members and incorporated it into its Healthier Together website. Importantly for this discussion, it also funded the next evaluation, with an ask to focus into some of our underserved communities.

This evaluation study was carried out independently and built on the previous one. The aim was to understand parent and carer views of the Little Orange Book since its introduction. It explores how the Little Orange Book is used and impacts on behaviour or confidence to manage symptoms of childhood illness. An additional aim was exploring the changes in accessing health services for children in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study identified a sample of parents and carers from Gateshead and Newcastle who have received the Little Orange Book. It aimed to identify if, and how parents and carers use the book, what they liked about it, barriers to use and if or how it could be improved. The evaluation explores any perceived impacts of the book, for example behaviour change of parents, increased confidence to manage health

conditions and use of health services. A further aim was to identify suggestions for further development of the book, and make recommendations for future research.

Next steps – 1 min/1-2 paragraphs

The evaluation identified several recommendations for practice. A key recommendation is the development of a strategic approach to disseminating and raising awareness of the purpose of the Little Orange Book across Newcastle and Gateshead (and across the North East and North Cumbria). It is crucial that all key services across health and education, who are the point of contact for parents and carers regarding their children's health, are aware of, regularly updated on, and are encouraged to signpost the Little Orange Book. The evaluation proposes that midwifery and health visiting services will be key to a streamlined dissemination of the book, with other services supporting its physical distribution. The digital version of the Little Orange Book is available on the regionwide Healthier Together website, which improves its reach to parents and carers across the North East and North Cumbria.

The Integrated Care Board, of which the Network is a workstream, has been supportive of sharing the Little Orange Book across its communication channels, and the Network's Clinical Lead Dr Mike McKean shared its impact in both regional and national presentations within NHS England.

The Little Orange Book will continue to develop, including its visual content, in particular the traffic light system and images. A future aim will be to improve the diversity and inclusivity of images, particularly in photographs used to show conditions such as rashes, to better include individuals of minority ethnic origin. While complex, it would be valuable to understand through future evaluations the impact of the Little Orange Book in terms of whether its use ultimately affects health service utilisation by parents and children.

I'm delighted to see the success of this valuable resource and look forward to see its ongoing progress to ultimately help more families.

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The Child Health and Wellbeing Network covers the regional geography of the North East and North Cumbria and has a specific remit to share good practice. This has meant that it is well placed to support some of the recommendations highlighted in phase 1 evaluation. Both myself and David Jones were founding core members of the Network. Having seen the value of the book to families, I'd been keen to spread the implementation of the Little Orange Book into my local Tees Valley and Durham area and had suggested the Network could play a key role in supporting this along with local services. The Network has supported the roll out through its large network of members and incorporated it into its Healthier Together website. Importantly for this discussion, it also funded the next evaluation, with an ask to focus into some of our underserved communities.

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It explores how the Little Orange Book is used and impacts on behaviour or confidence to manage symptoms of childhood illness. An additional aim during this evaluation was also exploring the changes in accessing health services for children in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study identified a sample of parents and carers from the Gateshead and Newcastle area who have received the Little Orange Book. It aimed to identify if, and how, parents and carers use the book, what they liked about it, barriers to use and if or how it could be improved. The evaluation explores any perceived impacts of the book, for example behaviour change of parents, increased confidence to manage health conditions and use of health services. And it also hoped to identify suggestions for further development of the book, and make recommendations for future research.

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The evaluation identified several recommendations for practice.

A key recommendation is the development of a strategic approach to disseminating and raising awareness of the purpose of the Little Orange Book across Newcastle and Gateshead (as well as more widely across the North East and North Cumbria).

It was felt to be crucial that all key services across health and education, who are the point of contact for parents and carers regarding their children's health, are made aware of, regularly updated on, and encouraged to signpost the Little Orange Book. The evaluation proposes that midwifery and health visiting services will be key to a streamlined dissemination of the book, with other services supporting its physical distribution. The digital version of the Little Orange Book is available on the regionwide Healthier Together website, which improves its reach to parents and carers across the North East and North Cumbria.

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