

creating

a celebration of innovative projects
tackling child poverty from the ground up

MAGIC



Local Network Fund
for children and young people



Compiled and published by **community links**

Thank You

THIS BOOK draws together the work of many people, often those whose work goes unrecognised. The development of this publication has been a team effort with vital contributions from project partners at the Children

and Young People's Unit, Community Foundation Network, the Local Network Fund administrators and Community Links. However, the publication stands as a celebration of the tremendous amount of work going on across the country with volunteers and community organisations giving their time, working with and supporting local children and young people...*creating magic!*

Compiled and published by Community Links

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The ideas and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editors or of Community Links

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THIS PUBLICATION IS a collaboration between three organisations who have pooled experience and expertise to celebrate the first year of the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People and share some of the lessons learned.

Creating Magic



Children and Young People's Unit.

Set up by the Prime Minister just 18 months ago, the unit is an innovative attempt to work right across Government on children's and young people's issues through an overarching strategy and the development of indicators to better measure success in a range of outcomes covering their overall well being. The Unit is working with eleven Government departments to develop action plans on effective participation of children and young people in policy making and service and design. The unit manages the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People and is also responsible for the £380 million Children's Fund partnerships providing a range of interventions at local level for 5–13 year olds showing early signs of difficulty.

www.cypu.gov.uk



Community Foundation Network.

A Community Foundation is the one-stop solution for those who want their giving to be for the lasting benefit of their local community. Gifts in cash, trusts, bequests, shares or property all help create permanent endowment funds, whose earnings meet local needs while respecting donors' wishes.

A fast growing style of philanthropy, Community Foundations already exist in most parts of the UK. Their professional expertise in making grants and building capacity is backed by local trustee oversight. They are increasingly called on to help deliver short-term programmes and emergency assistance on behalf of other grant-makers too. Through the national support organisation, Community Foundation Network, Community Foundations and other grant-making partners throughout England administer the government's Local Network Fund for Children and Young People

www.communityfoundations.org.uk

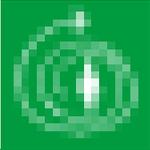


Community Links

Community Links is a network of projects run by local people; tackling practically and creatively the problems of our inner city community in East London. Since 1977, we have worked to identify and address the unmet needs of our community and along the way, we have broken new ground. Last year more than 30,000 people benefited from Community Links projects run by over 450 volunteers in 60 key sites. People who first became involved as users of our services now deliver 80% of our frontline services. Within this network, we have pioneered new ideas and new ways of working. We share this good practice nationally through publications and training programmes. This publication is a development of the Community Links Ideas Annual first published in 1989, since then over 1,000 ideas have been shared by the community groups who created them. Community Links would like to thank The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation for their support of our Ideas Annual work programme.

www.community-links.org

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Key



Aspirations and Experiences

Some children miss out on childhood experiences that others take for granted. Groups can organise activities and help children and young people achieve goals they would otherwise be unable to achieve.



Economic Disadvantage

Schemes that help families improve their living standards and cope with difficulties that come from being on a low income.



Isolation and Access

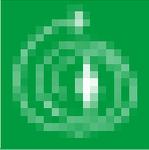
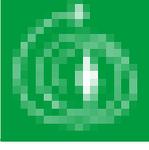
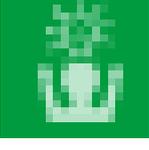
Support and opportunities for young people who may feel isolated or alone; or have difficulty accessing services that are available to other young people.

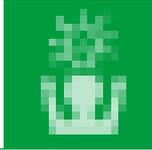
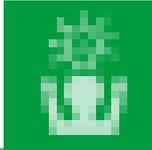
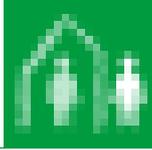
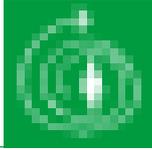
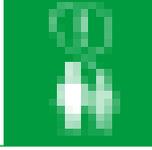
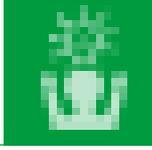


Children's Voices

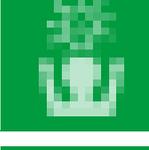
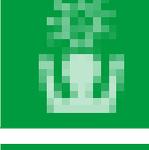
Giving children and young people the chance to give their own opinions about and advice on the matters that concern them.

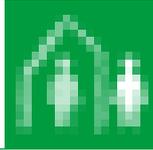
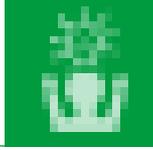
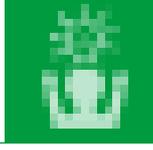
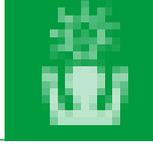
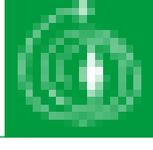
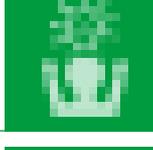
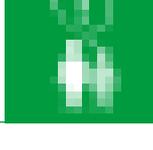
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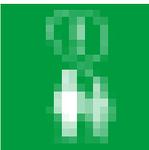
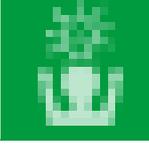
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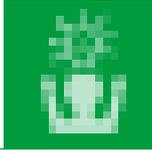
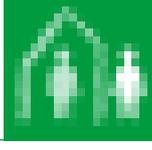
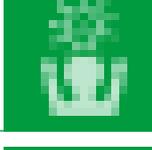
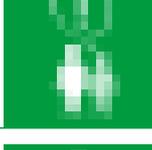
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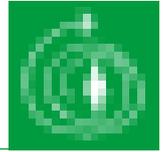
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Foreword

CREATING MAGIC is the first of a series of annual publications promoting good ideas that have been funded through the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People. The publication highlights some of the 1,500 projects that the Local Network Fund has supported, in its first year, to improve opportunities for children and young people.

The Local Network Fund for Children and Young People was launched by the Government in May 2001 as a key element of its commitment to tackle child poverty. The Fund aims to improve the lives of disadvantaged young people by supporting local community groups to enable young people to reach their full potential.

The Fund is piloting an innovative model of grant making with the aim being to develop a means for Government funding to reach those that can make best use of it in supporting children and young people. We believe that local people by their knowledge of and commitment to the areas they live in are best placed to identify and run projects that improve opportunities for their children and young people. This is why the Fund has been set up so that decisions on grant applications are taken by local people with an understanding of the issues faced by young people in their communities.

The publication highlights a wide range of initiatives that local groups have developed across the Local Network Fund's four themes of aspirations and experience, economic disadvantage, isolation and access and children's voices.

The diversity of needs tackled by local community groups through the Local Network Fund shows that there is no shortage of innovative local responses to child poverty.

The Local Network Fund operates through a partnership, between the Government's Children and Young People's Unit, Community Foundation Network, a national voluntary organisation, and local voluntary organisations responsible for administering the Fund. Key to the success of the Fund's first year has been the enthusiasm and experience of those local voluntary organisations that administer the local funds and of course the community groups that devise and operate projects for young people.

The Government's aim is to give every child the best possible start in life. The task is not simply to remove inequality but ensure that our young people receive the opportunities to develop to their full potential. We believe that a partnership between the Government, and the voluntary, community and faith sectors is the best way to tackle child poverty. The many innovative projects in this publication confirm this approach.

The aim of 'Creating Magic' is to show how local communities can make life better for their children and young people. All the projects covered in this publication have been developed over the past year and it is hoped that they will encourage other projects to develop across the country.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "John Denham". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Rt. Hon John Denham MP
Minister for Young People

Introduction

THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY local community groups are creating magic! The Local Network Fund for Children and Young People is barely a year old but has already supported an exciting range of projects that are making a difference to the lives of children and young people.

The primary aim of this book is to celebrate what can be achieved when local people come together to improve opportunities for their children and young people.

Whilst these ideas are not presented here as model projects, we hope they may provide an inspiration to other community organisations working to tackle child poverty.

Local Network Fund

The Local Network Fund, launched by the Chancellor last year, is part of the government's commitment to eradicate child poverty within a generation. It sits alongside a range of measures that include raising the income of families, especially for those on the lowest income, through tax and benefit reforms; giving children a better start in their early years through Sure Start programmes; intervening at an early stage through Children's Fund partnerships to help children at risk aged 5 to 13; and, through Connexions, offering a range of guidance and support for 13 to 19 year olds to help smooth the transition to adult life.

The Fund was initially a three-year programme totalling £70 million, which enables local communities to identify projects that support the development and creation of opportunities for children and young people up to the age of 19 who are facing poverty. The Chancellor's expenditure review of July 2002 has extended the Local Network Fund for a further two years with an additional £80million.

Within government the Local Network Fund is managed and implemented by the Children and Young People's Unit. This cross-government unit was created by the Prime Minister to take forward the government's over-arching strategy for children and young people and to join up policy-making across government departments.

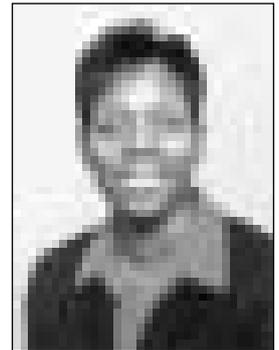
Nationally the Local Network Fund is administered by Community Foundation Network an organisation whose members have considerable experience in local grant making.

Tackling Poverty

We know that children who grow up in poverty are less likely to do well at school. In later life they are more likely to be unemployed or in low paid work, more likely to suffer ill health, and are likely to retire without an adequate income. In turn, of course, they are more likely to pass on poverty of opportunity to their own children. The practical expression of low income for many families is that children go without two or more items that today's parents regard as 'necessities', such as adequate clothing, three meals a day and out of school activities.

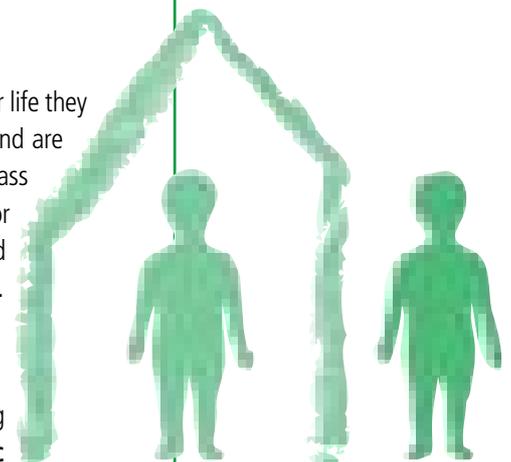
Economic Disadvantage

Low income is a key aspect of poverty as it influences outcomes not only during childhood but also into adulthood. The Local Network Fund theme of **economic**



Althea Efunshile
Director,
Children and Young
People's Unit

The Local Network Fund...is part of the government's commitment to eradicate child poverty within a generation



disadvantage enables groups to organise schemes that help families improve their living standards and cope with difficulties that come from being on a low income

This publication features projects making a difference for these families. For example, in the North East the Goole Furniture and Recycling scheme is an existing project that has been able to extend its services to young families due to Local Network Funding. In Cornwall, an entirely new project, providing support to young parents in Bodmin, has been established as the result of a Local Network Fund grant.

Aspirations and Experiences

Other influences than income also affect the young people's outcomes in life. There is clear evidence that children from poor families have lower expectations about their future. The theme of **aspirations and experiences** is to extend the quality of opportunities for those young people who would otherwise miss out on experiences enjoyed by their peers. The Local Network Fund has already supported projects working to redress this imbalance. Those featured in this publication include the newly formed, Middlesbrough-based Breckon Hill Outdoor Pursuits Club, who combine education and fun in family trips to museums and theatres and gave this publication its title. Nottingham's Dyspraxia Connexion is another example providing fully supported, but challenging residential weekends for young people living with Dyspraxia.

children from poor families have lower expectations about their future,

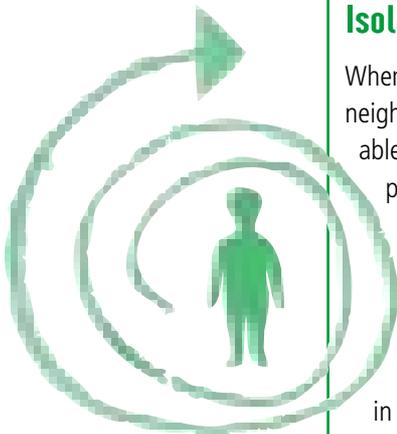
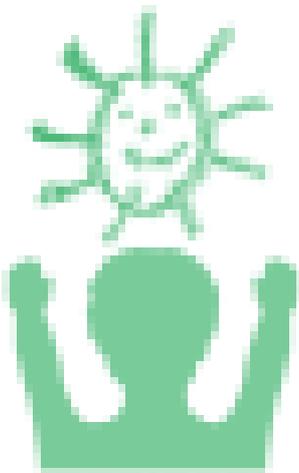
Isolation and Access

Where children and young people live also affects their chances in life. Those living in poorer neighbourhoods may experience a rundown physical environment. Families in rural areas may not be able to depend on the same quality of services. Projects under the theme of **isolation and access** provide valuable support and opportunities for children and young people who may feel isolated or alone and have difficulty in accessing services that many children take for granted. Interestingly there are two similar mobile bus projects featured in this publication responding to the differing needs of their respective communities. The Birmingham-based Rock Community Bus provides a base for play and educational work in some of the most disadvantaged areas of inner city Birmingham. Whilst a family learning approach is adopted by the Omnibus project in rural north Norfolk where services and resources are more difficult to access.

Children's Voices

The Local Network Fund has been designed to meet the needs of children and young people. The best services are those that involve their users in the planning, management and delivery. The theme of **children's voices** gives children and young people the chance to give their opinions and advice on matters that concern them. Kent-based Thanet Youth Council is a good example of young people using their voice very effectively. The Local Network Fund supported a major conference where almost 300 young people came together to share their ideas and voice

The best services are those that involve their users in the planning, management and delivery.



their concerns. In Kirklees the Involving Young Citizens Equally initiative is working to ensure that children and young people have a direct influence on the provision of local services that affect them.

Innovative Grant Giving

An innovative method of government grant giving has been developed through 54 local network funds, which by April 2003 will cover England. (The map on page 79 shows the Fund's areas and those that are currently operational). Local Funds are administered by voluntary organisations, with grant making and community development expertise, such as Community Foundations and Rural Community Councils. Advice and support is available locally for Local Network Fund applicants on developing and managing projects, crafting an effective proposal for funding and ensuring that projects provide opportunities that are safe and protect young people.



...there is no shortage of good ideas for supporting and enhancing opportunities for young people.

Our call centre – **0845 113 0161** – is an innovative way of providing groups with application information. It is designed to enable us to track every enquiry so that we can improve our understanding of the reasons why some groups request application packs but decide not to submit them.

The experience of the first year has shown that there is no shortage of good ideas for supporting and enhancing opportunities for young people. Over 1,500 projects were funded in year one which, considering a mid-year launch and that much of the first year focused on establishing the fund's infrastructure, is particularly impressive. However, providing Local Network Funding to ensure the continuation

of existing projects and to allow project workers the time to deliver front line services rather than devote their energies to fund raising has been invaluable to those established groups who have, over many years, worked to support some of our most vulnerable children. We expect that the number of newly formed groups securing funding will rise in the second year as our outreach and support services develop their work with emerging groups. This publication is one way of sharing the knowledge and inspiration of those successful applicants to the fund who are already running projects in their local communities.

...to allow project workers the time to deliver front line services...has been invaluable to those established groups who have, over many years, worked to support some of our most vulnerable children.

Evaluating Outcomes

We are learning as we go about the best way of delivering the Local Network Fund. We are shortly to commence a major programme of evaluation, which will help us to improve our delivery of the Fund and assess its success in meeting its objectives of reducing child poverty and of developing government grant making through local communities.

Our evaluation will tell us more about improving the Fund. Child protection and the participation of children and young people are two key areas already identified for development.

Child Protection

The Local Network Fund is the only government grant scheme at present requiring groups to have a child protection policy. The Fund aims to ensure that all groups receiving funding have a basic

**National
Call Centre
0845 113 0161**

understanding of the issues for small voluntary groups in protecting children and young people. This means having a named individual responsible for ensuring that the group approaches child protection in a systematic way and is able to deal with situations of possible abuse. This publication includes the example of the East Cleveland Youth Housing Trust who have refined and developed their child protection policy as part of their funded project. The Local Network Fund is currently examining the ways in which it can support local community groups meet these important criteria.

Participation of Children and Young People

A priority for the Local Network Fund in the forthcoming year is to ensure that its own grant-making processes and funded activities involves young people in planning, management and delivery.

A priority for the Local Network Fund in the forthcoming year is to ensure that its own grant making processes and funded activities involves young people in planning, management and delivery.

The local administrators of the Local Network Fund have extensive knowledge of supporting successful projects and they know what works in their local areas. Administrators have identified examples of good practice projects for inclusion in this publication. Communication with each of the projects selected has enabled them to edit their entries to ensure the projects are correctly represented.

The publication has been produced by Richard McKeever of Community Links. We have benefited immensely from Community Links' community development and publishing experience and in particular the series of Ideas Annuals produced by Community Links from where the idea for this publication came. However, whatever success Creating Magic and the Local Network Fund has achieved is due to the hundreds of local community groups who have created experiences and opportunities for children and young people where none existed.

Get in Touch

The projects in Creating Magic have all agreed that their contact details can be published and are happy to share their experiences with other groups. I hope that this publication will encourage groups to contact each other and discuss their experience of providing successful activities for children and young people.

The Local Network Fund is still developing and we would be very pleased to receive comments on the format of Creating Magic and the ideas and activities contained in this publication.

Local Network Fund
for children and young people



Local Network Fund
for children and young people

MANY PEOPLE think that arthritis is a condition of old age. This is not the case. Around 14,500 children and young people under the age of 16 have arthritis and it affects one million people under 46 in the UK. Arthritis is the biggest single cause of disability in the UK, the main symptoms are pain and loss of movement.

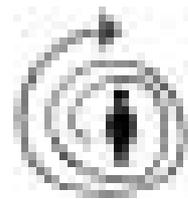
Arthritis Care is a volunteer charity that helps people with arthritis move from dependence to independence. It is a user-led organisation providing assistance through self-help groups. Support is offered to families to improve the prospects of young people with arthritis.

With a Local Network Fund for Children and Young People grant they have formed a new Young Arthritis Care contact group for young people with arthritis who live in Cornwall, many in isolated areas. The group is training young people and their parents who can then offer empathy, compassion and information to other young people. The project enables the young people to chat with someone who understands what they are going through. More than 100 people volunteer as Young Arthritis Care Contacts nationwide. They all have arthritis themselves and understand the isolation young people with arthritis often feel. The volunteers themselves benefit from this project through forging closer links with their local community.

The project also aims to help prevent the onset of clinical depression, which may develop as a consequence of living with arthritis long term. This is a particular concern in isolated rural areas where transport and communication are more difficult.

To carry out the full project three part-time helpers are being appointed, one Young Arthritis Care contact, one Teenage contact and a Parents contact. The project aims to enable young disabled people to obtain appropriate information, support and training, which will enable them to overcome clinical depression gain self confidence and move to a more independent lifestyle.

Making contact in Cornwall



Positive Future

Arthritis Care also runs a host of training courses for young people with arthritis that local members will be able to attend. Teenagers can build their confidence on a 'Positive Future Workshop' where assertive behaviour, confidence building and independent living are all explored. Often these weekends are the first time they meet other people with arthritis of their age. They learn to deal assertively with the situations they face at school and socially. This may, in turn, lead to an enhanced quality of life for the young participants.

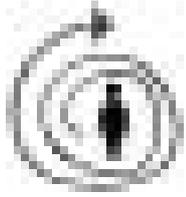
Self-help contact group for young people living with arthritis



ARTHRITIS CARE

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Asian Disability Project

Support for families of young disabled people

THE ASIAN DISABILITY PROJECT provides a unique service in Sheffield to Asian families caring for children and young people with ADHT, sensory, physical and learning disabilities. The project was first established in 1987 following the success of a local support and information sharing group

Overall Aims of the Project

The project aims to promote the welfare of Asian families and children with disabilities, who are seriously disadvantaged through lack of personal, social and economic resources. The project operates in areas of high deprivation in Sheffield and addresses issues arising from poverty, poor housing, health, unemployment and exhaustive care responsibilities. All of these factors have an effect on the parents, young carers, siblings and the children with disabilities they are caring for.

A gap in provision from mainstream service providers has been identified, with some welfare services failing to address the specific needs of Asian children in socially vulnerable settings. This project seeks to implement its aims by both offering a culturally and linguistically sensitive service which Asian families can relate to, and supporting these families by means of advice, advocacy, outreach work, group and play work.

It aims to contribute to the alleviation of stress; to help Asian carers gain a more positive influence and control in their lives and improve the quality of life for the families and the

children they are caring for. The project is very committed to empowering its group members to be more confident in asserting their views; individually, through collective action and by passing on relevant skills and knowledge to Asian carers so they can become self supporting.

Continuity of Provision

A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has added to the services on offer, but also importantly for their client group, ensured the continuity of existing services including group work and short-term home-based respite care. Educational, recreational and issue-based sessions continue to operate. Outings and summer play schemes sessions are able to proceed as a result of the funding. Weekly play sessions for children with disabilities and their siblings provide a positive play environment, peer support, access to play resources and a community setting for all those participating.

This unique project shows that a range of services providing specific support to children and young people in need can be organised by professionals and volunteers working together in a local project.

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BAMBOOZLE THEATRE COMPANY provides theatrical and educational experiences for people with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties and sensory impairment. The aim is to provide an environment where young people are able to discover and develop their own potential.

A Bamboozle project funded by the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People will run two week-long residencies at the Haymarket Theatre in Leicester. Using a studio space equipped with professional standard lighting and sound equipment provides a variety of stimuli and experiences that could not be replicated in schools/special schools and day centres. The use of stimulating light and sound is of particular importance to many young people with learning difficulties.

The young people who participate in the project have an opportunity to direct the development of the theatre piece they are working on, within themes set from the outset. Work includes drama, dance, song, mask, puppetry, building environments as well as problem solving and developing the narrative of stories. Recent workshops have been inspired by Australian aboriginal creation myths.

Typically, an unrehearsed 'sharing' of the work with an invited audience of family members, school staff and governors, funders and theatre professionals will mark the end of a workshop. It is not a staged performance but a re-working of some of the significant moments from the workshop and allows the audience to experience some of the flavour of the week's activities.

I was surprised to see Faye so relaxed and happy during the Friday performance. She talked about it so much during the week and is still singing the songs.

Mother of a project participant

Through many years experience as teachers and advisers in education and working with people with learning difficulties, the founders and directors of Bamboozle have developed an understanding of the needs of these young people and the approaches and techniques that work. Central to

Bamboozle Theatre Company



this approach is the belief that the more that is asked of people the more they are able to give.

‘We have already reconsidered the level of expectation we have of our pupils (which we thought was high already),’

Teacher

High Quality Provision

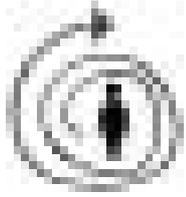
The project is committed to ensuring that a high standard of provision is delivered for the young people who participate and that all professional artists receive extra training for working with people with special needs as part of the project. INSET training, with appropriate cover for staff attending, is also organised for the facilitators and helpers who accompany the young people. To extend the benefits for the young people beyond the period of the residency, a follow up session is also provided to allow teachers and support staff to develop the themes and experiences beyond the one-week intensive period.

Developing potential through theatrical experiences



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Bear Necessities

Sports equipment for young wheelchair athletes

THE BEARS WHEELCHAIR SPORTS ASSOCIATION is a volunteer run basketball club for disabled young people. The young people involved in the project all have disabilities that exclude them from, or at least limit access to, facilities that their peers enjoy. Since their formation in 2000, the Bears have encouraged young disabled athletes to enjoy the benefits of competitive sport and shown a commitment to developing new talent.

In an attempt to extend their provision the group has established a development programme and has been awarded a Local Network Fund grant to carry this out. The grant will be used to purchase three purpose-made lightweight sports wheelchairs and to cover the costs of additional coaching sessions and transport. They aim to enable more young people to take part in competitions and having specialised sports wheelchairs will enable the team to allow interested young people to 'have a go'. The Bears have ambitions to form a junior team to compete in local and national competitions.

The Bears view one of the most important features of their project as raising awareness of competitive sports in schools. The integration of young people with disabilities into mainstream

education is a positive change to be welcomed. However, if it is done without proper thought being given to the specialised sporting and fitness needs of the disabled young people, it could lead to exclusion from games lessons – adding to feelings of isolation and demoralisation. Part of the project is designed to 'teach the teachers' (and support workers and carers) so that any positive benefits can be passed on to disabled young people who have experienced integrated education.

In addition, the project will also educate able-bodied peers in mainstream schools who will see what their disabled classmates can achieve with determination and the right encouragement and support.

Positive Role Models

By providing positive role models for disabled young people, the project encourages them to set their own targets, in sport and other areas of personal development. Playing sport may improve the physical mobility of wheelchair

users and in some cases lessen the symptoms associated with particular conditions. Exercise is particularly important to young disabled people as it can assist in preventing circulatory



problems, pressure sores or poor posture.

The social side of playing sport is also important. Team sport provides opportunities to travel and to meet people outside the normal school circle. The chance to get to know more experienced members of the team and to discover how they have overcome challenges to achieve their goals is very valuable.

Being part of a sports team and living an active life competitively and socially can add to a sense of psychological well being for the young people and enable them to participate in activities that their able-bodied peers take for granted.



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LITTLE LEARNERS is an umbrella organisation for four groups working with pre-school children in the Birkby, Hillhouse and Fartown areas of Huddersfield. These areas, significantly disadvantaged by overcrowding and poverty, are home to many families with young children. A large number of the children live in families where English is not the first language.

Volunteers run three of the four groups. They came together in autumn 2000 to share resources and ideas, to tell local people what was available locally. They also make joint representation to bodies like the Children's Fund and the local Single Regeneration Budget project (SRB5) so that better opportunities can be won for local parents and their babies and small children.

Part of the early work was a survey of provision in the area. As a result of this research, two part time workers, a bilingual outreach worker and a crèche worker funded by SRB5 are now working with the groups. Support that was not available to the groups individually has now become available due to their collaboration.

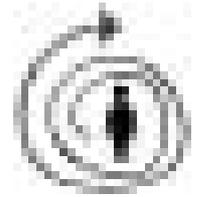
A recent visit to a Centre of Excellence in a neighbouring area made the group realise how 'down at heel' their equipment was.

“We decided that just because our children have to use voluntary provision that does not mean it should be poor quality.”

A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has enabled the group to upgrade their equipment and provide new toys for the children to play with. The impact of this grant, however, goes beyond the children themselves. The new materials have made the toddlers' groups special places to go, and will encourage parents to return with their children.

Through regular attendance at the toddler groups, the intention is to encourage parents, including those who are isolated or from minority ethnic communities, to meet others in a similar situation. The aim is to get more parents involved in developing further opportunities for themselves and their children, and get them involved with running the voluntary groups.

Little Learners, Big Impact



Ambitious Expansion Plans

Ambitious plans for extending the services already on offer include the purchase of new books and book storage equipment for which the group is raising its own funds. A Christmas book fair was held which raised funds, but also gave parents a chance to buy cut-price books for their children. The library service and other groups involved with providing services to young children were represented too.

The local Kirklees Early Years Service have run 'Babies into Books' sessions at the request of the group and more sessions are planned. The group also intends to set up a story sack project. Story Sacks are large cloth bags that contain a book and 'props' that help in telling the story. Parents are encouraged to use the books with their children, bringing the stories to life. The story sacks can be borrowed and taken home to encourage reading at home.

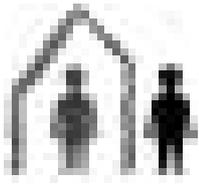
Little Learners have also worked with local health visitors to start a Baby Group, especially aimed at supporting parents with new babies.

By working together, to share ideas, skills, resources and their commitment, as well as attracting statutory sector partnerships, the Little Learners have already made a big impact for the children in their part of Huddersfield.

Huddersfield
toddlers groups
sharing
resources and
ideas

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Young Parents Group

Support for teenage lone parents

SINCE 1997, Bodmin Youth Project has been providing leisure and educational facilities for the young people of Bodmin, Cornwall in both building-based and detached settings.

This organisation is the base for an entirely new project set up to provide services for young parents in the local area, particularly lone parent mothers between 15 and 19 years old. Bodmin has a comparatively large number of teenage mothers, yet initial research found that there were no local agencies providing formal support to this potentially isolated and excluded group. A significant gap in local provision was identified through contact with health visitors, the local Connexions service and Share (the local Information and Advice service for Young People).

Funding from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has enabled this new initiative to begin offering Bodmin's young parents their own group where they can meet and share experiences in a relaxed and informal setting.

At the group's meetings on Friday mornings, the babies and young children have a chance to play with the toys provided. They are looked after by trained crèche workers

whilst the mothers have time for themselves. One mother who has not been confident to leave her child with a babysitter since she was born had her first experience of time on her own when coming to the group and leaving her child in the crèche.

As the young mums are often isolated and without other support from friends or family the project has initially concentrated on getting to know each other and building confidence. The regular group meetings are a focus and a structure for part of the week.

By working together, the aim is to help participants reduce feelings of loneliness and exclusion and give them an opportunity to grow in knowledge and self-confidence.

Learning New Skills

As the project develops, there will be opportunities to learn about nutrition, children's



health and child development, as well as benefits awareness and household budgeting. The content of these sessions will be determined by the needs and interests of the group themselves and may

be facilitated by representatives of external agencies. The aim is to initially develop skills to assist the young people to cope and then move towards skills for future employability.

Whilst the focus of the group is support for lone teenage parents, their children also enjoy the Friday morning sessions where they get to meet and play with other youngsters and use a range of bigger toys they don't have at home. These children may not have access to other forms of pre-school learning. They also benefit from having 'mum' more relaxed and self-confident as a result of the support the group offers.

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THERE ARE TIMES when families need some outside support, stresses of family life can be exacerbated where additional pressures of living with illness or disability is present. Poverty may be, in part, the cause of relationship breakdown and is often an effect of a family living apart in separate accommodation stretching an already limited income. Several projects funded by the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People provide services for the children of families facing various difficulties.

Integrated After-school Club

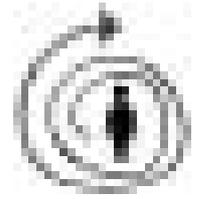
Some children with specific conditions require a significant amount of time and energy devoted to their needs. In these circumstances one child in a family may be in need of constant attention leaving parents/carers little time to concentrate on their siblings.

In Cornwall, the Breage After School Experience (BASE) provides a safe and secure environment for youngsters with special needs (autism/aspergers syndrome, hyperactivity and dyspraxia) who find socialising difficult. This provides parents/carers some respite time which they have been able to spend with other children in the family or get paid work. The after-school and holiday club enables children with special needs to benefit from mixing with other children, thereby broadening the horizons of all the children who share experiences together.

The after-school club was established six years ago and now provides daily care, recreation and education for children outside school time and during school holidays. The youngsters enjoy regular trips and outings, as well as sessions where local artists are brought in to work with them. It is based in a rural area where many families suffer poverty and opportunities are limited; the club brings children together from a number of isolated villages.

Many of the children attending the club pay fees but, to ensure that the specialist provision is not denied to families on low income, free spaces are reserved for youngsters with special needs. The club provides the specialised and qualified staff to offer support and in some cases one-to-one contact.

Family Support



A selection of projects aiding families facing difficulties

Funding from the Local Network Fund has enabled the club to continue its operation and to bridge a funding gap caused by the ending of other income streams. With the vulnerable target group that the club caters for, a regular routine and consistency of provision is vital. Many voluntary services such as this are reliant on unpredictable funding streams, yet provide a long running service to a client group dependent on regularity and consistency.

Over the last six years, BASE has been able to directly support a small number of children with special needs, their brothers and sisters also benefit and this has enabled parents to gain or keep some employment in an area of low income. The continuation of the club has also given some work to play leaders locally.

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relate

Relateen

Relate Cheshire and Merseyside provide support, advice and counselling to people experiencing relationship difficulties, family breakdown and divorce. In an extension to this well-established provision, they are now offering help for young people affected by the breakdown in their parents' relationship.

This is a new service for the Runcorn area replicating similar pilot schemes run in Belfast and Manchester. It is the well known Relate service designed and run specifically for young people aged 11 to 18 suffering as a result of their parents broken relationship.



Prior to the launch of Relateen nothing was available locally. Parents attending Relate sessions identified the need for the service. They were aware that their sons and daughters were affected by family crisis, but not receiving any support to cope with it. Counselling sessions for the young people take place within neutral settings such as local schools. A grant from the Local Network Fund resulted in the recruitment and training of two additional counsellors skilled in working with young people.

Local children and young people aged 11 to 18 are now benefiting directly from the counselling – the local community will benefit as a whole from a new service that focuses on support for people experiencing breakdown in relationships.

Counselling for Children

Fractured relationships occasionally descend into violent confrontations. In 90% of domestic violence incidents, children are in the same or next room (British Crime Survey 1992).



Acorns, in North Tyneside, is a project established to offer counselling and support to children and young people who are living with the effects of domestic violence.

The project developed from the work of a local domestic violence support project for women who were concerned that, although their children were distressed by witnessing, or directly experiencing, violence, there was no support available specifically for them. Initially funded by local probation service and later by Northumbria police as part of its crime-reduction strategy, the group was able to offer a third strand supporting children alongside the projects for women and the voluntary project for domestic violence offenders.

Since August 2001, Acorns has been established as a voluntary organisation with its own management committee. A Local Network Fund grant has meant that a part-time children and young people's counsellor has been

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employed to complement existing services.

One-to-one counselling sessions are offered initially for a series of eight visits, which is reviewed to ensure the young people are getting the full support they need.

“I just think it would help me a lot to talk and get more confidence. To sometimes not be scared to talk and not be scared to ask people for something.”

Counsellors also work to support the non-abusing parent/carer, particularly during the counselling process when the young person may become even more distressed. Acorns works with children and young people between the ages of 6 and 18, and with the addition of the new staff member, they are able to manage a caseload of eighteen young people at any one time. The grant has enabled more young people to experience the counselling and support services, to deal with their feelings and look towards a more positive future life.

“So that I can be happy again and just forget what has happened.”



Keeping in Contact

In some families, not just those living with domestic violence, breakdowns in relationship become irretrievable, potentially leaving children having no contact with their non-resident parent.

For families in these circumstances, child contact centres provide a neutral, non-judgemental, supervised environment where children can have regular meetings with their non-resident parent.

Referrals from court welfare officers, solicitors or from social services establish a venue where absent parents, (occasionally grandparents or other family members), can meet with children. Although child contact

centres are responding to directives from courts or social services, no statutory provision exists.

Meetings last 2 to 3 hours and usually take place on weekend afternoons. The contact centre provides a safe environment where children can retain ongoing contact with their non-resident parent but avoid the friction or uncertainty that may come from direct meetings between estranged parents.

A Local Network Fund grant has enabled centres to establish or extend these services. In Worksop, Nottinghamshire, one of the 95 centres run by the WRVS was re-opened in September 2001 to provide separated families with a safe environment to meet. The centre has about twenty-four volunteers who each cover one session of supported contact each month. The Worksop centre has space for children to play together and a garden for outside activities in the summer. Parties for Christmas and other festivals provide an opportunity for non-resident parents to celebrate family occasions with their children.

The Local Network Fund grant has enabled the centre to provide children's toys and parties as well as cover the costs of rent, light, heat and volunteers' expenses. There is increasing demand for the service and an extension to the hours may be considered.

In Folkestone, Kent, contact scheme has been running for 10 years but is in need of support to pay rent on the premises they use. The centre is very busy with between seven and nine families using it each weekend – often with two or three children per family.

The choice of a centre for meeting is usually determined by the availability of a centre close to the parent where the children are resident. Folkestone's coastal location has meant that

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Contacts

visits have been arranged with non-resident parents travelling from France and the Netherlands to make contact with their children.

The Folkestone centre offers both supervised visits and 'pick-up' facilities where a child can be taken out from the centre and brought back by a parent who does not have to meet directly with their estranged partner.

Supporting Families

As these projects show, a variety of difficult situations can be eased through families getting a bit of outside help. Families attempting to deal with the extra attention that a child with special needs requires are gaining support from Local Network funded projects. By funding services to help prevent family breakdown in the first place, and supporting ongoing contact with both parents where it is inevitable, the Local Network Fund is contributing to child centred work with parents. It is assisting projects aimed at making times of family crisis less stressful for the children and young people living with the consequences.

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BRECKON HILL SCHOOL in Middlesbrough serves a catchment area with many disadvantaged families. Several children arrive in the nursery with little or no English and few of the pre-school experiences many of their peers would consider 'normal'.

Many families, whose own experiences of school were negative, want their children to achieve but have low expectations of the outcome.

Several parents at the Breckon Hill School told the head that they would love to take their families to museums at the weekends but they either have no transport or find it too expensive. The parents are always keen to find out about the programme of day trips and residential visits already offered by the school and often comment that they wish they had had similar experiences themselves.

The school's Head formed the Breckon Hill Outdoor Pursuits Club with staff, governor and parent volunteers. The club aims to raise the self-esteem and aspirations of the children taking part by providing residential and day trip activities not normally provided by the local authority. Parents can buy a family ticket for a nominal £5.00, which enables one or two parents and up to three children to participate in the day trip. The remainder of the cost of the trip is met by a Local Network Fund grant.

One of the Asian mums at the school is particularly excited by the trips. Her husband works long hours as a taxi driver and is unable to take the family on outings. She had not even visited the park on the outskirts of town – a 35p bus ride away.

Bubbling Over with Pleasure

Parents accompany their youngsters on the excursions resulting in a family experience they can all share. So far, four trips have been successfully completed with about 50 people travelling each time. Nursery-age children returned from their trip to Newham Grange Leisure Farm 'bubbling over with pleasure at having fed the lambs'. The furthest excursion so far has been to the Leeds Armouries Museum. The children were concerned about a hawk that flew off during the falconry display and tried to spot it from the coach all the way back to Middlesbrough! Other locations have included

Creating Magical Experiences



'Life' – Newcastle's interactive museum, which was combined with a walk along the riverside to a nervous crossing of the Millennium Bridge, and Sunderland's Glass Centre Museum.

Many children have never been to live theatre or listened to live music performed unless provided in a school setting. However, the maximum effect is gained by taking children to a real theatre. These events are planned but are being held over to the darker nights in winter as the project organiser says:

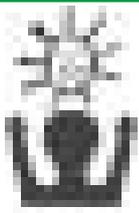
There's something magical about coming out of a theatrical experience in the dark and that's what we're all about...creating the magical experiences.



Raising expectations with Middlesbrough families

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Health Support Day

Health advice for lone parents

THE BURNGREAVE WOMEN'S GROUP is a Sheffield-based group of young mothers who meet weekly. This ethnically mixed group is largely made up of lone parents who have been meeting together since May 2001 to share common concerns and encourage their own development. Following research and consultation in the local area they have established a series of events and activities designed to meet locally identified priorities.

One innovative project was to set up a one-day event to inform members and other women in the local communities of the health and relaxation support available to them. Workshops and taster sessions enabled participants to experience different techniques and treatments in a safe environment.

Around fifty women who attended benefited from the event. The day consisted of a lively mix of health advice, keep-fit, massage, aromatherapy and reflexology.

In addition, advisers from Connexions and the careers guidance service were on hand to talk to women about employment and training opportunities. Advice and information about appropriate local courses was made available.

A healthy buffet lunch was available. The event was well received and those who attended expressed an interest in more regular events taking place.

Fun for Children

A crèche was provided for the young children who enjoyed the children's entertainer whilst their mothers were able to attend workshops and experience all the activities on offer.

The Burngreave Women's Group put together an event during which local women were able to relax, socialise with others, and inform themselves. An environment was created



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where the young women's own development was paramount.

For many lone parents facing hardship, a break from the routine and an opportunity to learn about support services around health and relaxation, far from being 'self indulgent', is of benefit not only to the young mothers themselves, but also to the whole family.

A GRANT from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has enabled Rochdale-based Cartwheel Community Arts to extend the activities of its after-school club. Based in the Library on the Langley Estate at Middleton the project has been running for two years. Unemployment and poverty is a major problem locally with the local authority ward ranked 211 out of 214 across Greater Manchester in terms of household earnings. Those children receiving free school meals account for 71% of the school population compared with the borough average of 33%. The three primary schools serving the estate were returning amongst the lowest scores in their SATs.

In an attempt to focus on these issues and improve oral and written communication the Magic! Club is running a series of 60 creative literacy, family-learning workshops run jointly by a visual artist and a writer or drama worker.

Family Literacy Model

The project is applying a family literacy approach which means that the children are accompanied by a parent/carer at the weekly sessions, where the emphasis is on having fun and learning together through creative activities. A series of activities have been designed for the young people to take away and work on at home with the help of their parent/carer. The project is pitched at an appropriate level, recognising that some adult participants may not be confident readers and writers themselves.

Parents are encouraged to borrow books from the library and with the assistance of the library staff a special 'book box' has been assembled featuring books related to the themes set for the workshops.

Cartwheel Community Arts chose the name Magic! Club to appeal to the younger children and to emphasise that the project is different from school. Attendance is voluntary, but it is important to try and get a degree of commitment from the families at the outset.

The Magic! Club



Three Additional Strands

The Local Network Fund grant will enable the Magic! Club to extend in three ways. Firstly, a digital artist will work with the participants to document the project using digital video and still photography. The artist will provide each family with a visual record of involvement in the project. Also a documentary approach will combine interviews and an assessment of outcomes in a document of potential interest to others working in the field.

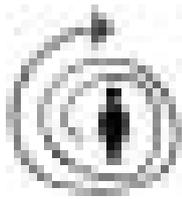
A second strand is to bring in a visiting author or illustrator for one session each term to demystify the publishing process and to make links between words and pictures in children's books and the people who created them.

Finally, the project will use some of the grant to take the families on an educational trip each term. This can provide a focus for the work, drawing together the themes of a term's activities into a significant and memorable family event, such as a day at the seaside or a trip to a professionally produced pantomime. For many of the target families, this will provide opportunities they are otherwise unable to experience.

After-school creative family literacy project

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Contacts



Child Deaf Youth Project

Youth club for D/deaf children and young people in Teesside

THE CHILD DEAF YOUTH PROJECT was established in Cleveland in 1995. The organisation evolved from an idea put forward by Cath Smith, who was at that time working at Beverley School. She secured the funding and an advocacy project was set up with support from the Cleveland Disability Forum. The first Management Committee was made up of representatives from education, health, social services and the voluntary sector together with parents and adults from the D/deaf community.

Today the organisation is an independent charity, comprising of D/deaf children, their families, D/deaf adults and interested professionals. A democratically elected committee of D/deaf and hearing people manage the project, which endeavours to improve the quality of life for those living with deafness and to offer young people opportunities to develop skills and reach their full potential.

The Project has developed a youth club facility specifically for D/deaf young people who face isolation and communication difficulties in their everyday lives. The young people benefit from opportunities to socialise and learn with others who share their language (British Sign Language) and experiences. Youth club members are encouraged to take an active role in

developing ideas for the programme of events and the way that the club is run.

The Child Deaf Youth Project currently caters for two age groups (under 10 and 11–17) but is hoping to set up a group aimed at 18–25 year olds.

Committed Volunteers

A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has enabled the project to offer child protection training and a first aid course to volunteers and also cover their expenses and entrance fees on outings.

The project is going from strength to strength, with growing membership and excellent volunteer commitment, many regularly attend the fortnightly sessions

A summer playscheme is planned to run alongside the youth club during the school holidays which will encourage members to meet their peers as many do not live

within the local area and may feel isolated in the holiday times. A residential week and school leavers course has also been organised for the summer.

The Child Youth Deaf Project aims to encourage independence and confidence as well as to

identify and offer adult D/deaf role models and mentors at a crucial age. It will help to build self-esteem, assertiveness, and social skills as well as to train and educate young people in preparation for adult life. It will equip them with skills and knowledge to enable them to cope as a minority group in a hearing world – empowering them and giving them a ‘voice’.

■ *NB This project has requested that D/deaf is used throughout this article to signify a commitment to all D/deaf people and an inclusive approach, welcoming all D/deaf people whatever their language and cultural preference.*



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LOW INCOME, unemployment, social and economic isolation and lone parenting are factors facing many families in Withernsea, East Yorkshire. Such isolation can often lead to parents having very low self-esteem and confidence themselves which, put very basically, will often lead to less social activities involving their children. Analysis of local figures indicates that one-quarter of all children in the area live in households with no income earner. Nearly half of the households do not have access to a car, a significant factor in an area remote from the nearest city, Hull.

Children and Family Action is a voluntary organisation based in Withernsea, which aims to promote, support and develop facilities for children and families in Withernsea and Holderness. In particular the care, support and education of children and their families and carers so that their conditions of life may be improved. The group aim to provide access to constructive, educational play and to involve as many local people in this process as possible

Children and Family Action have, over recent years, run an annual festival of Children's Art, providing local children of all ages with an opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities including music, dance and arts and crafts.

My four-year-old son really enjoyed the three days of entertainment you ran down in Valley Gardens, and having his face painted! All he spoke about for days after was when he went in the road banging his drum that he had made with one of the helpers.

Expanding Activities

With a grant from the Local Network Fund the festival was able to expand this year and provide an even wider range of multi-cultural activities including African music, drumming and dance activities, storytelling and a puppet workshop. This expansion in activities has led to Children and Family Action working together with a wider network of local groups.



Children's Arts Festival



Over 1,400 young people participated in the festival, which built their self-confidence and self-esteem through setting them challenges to try new activities they would otherwise be unable to experience.

Low Cost Trips

In addition to the festival, Children and Family Action provide families the opportunity to go on low cost trips over the summer. These trips provided families who did not have the means or opportunities to discover other areas, the chance to go out have some fun, and spend time together as a family.

The grant from the Local Network Fund has enabled those involved in setting up these projects to focus directly on delivering the best possible service for local young people whereas in previous years enormous amounts of time has had to be expended in raising funds from small charitable organisations.

Participation in arts and crafts activities



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Art Afloat in Wolverhampton

Volunteer run
arts and crafts
workshops on a
narrowboat

SINCE 1977 the Children at Risk Project has been providing facilities for young people who are experiencing difficulties with education, social or economic problems. Initially providing local magistrates courts with programmes for young offenders as an alternative to custodial sentences, the project has expanded and developed into an organisation providing a wide range of services designed to provide leisure activities and educational opportunities for local children and young people.

The project, based in Wolverhampton, operates several fully accessible narrowboats, which are used to take groups on trips and provide a base for arts workshops.

The innovative concept of the Art Afloat project is to take a group of young people on a relaxing narrowboat ride along the canal during which they have a choice of fun arts and craft workshops. A successful pilot scheme confirmed that the idea was a good one and now with funding from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People alongside a BBC Children in Need grant, the project is continuing.

The project enables groups of up to fifteen participants, between 5 and 16 years old, to try various activities including mask making,

painting and drawing, badge making and model making alongside professional artists and volunteers.

Local children and young people have benefited from the scheme, which has enabled them to participate in an alternative arts project in a unique setting, giving many young people an experience they will value.

Vital Volunteer Support

To assist in this work, CARP recruit, train and develop skills of volunteers locally. Local newspaper requests for volunteer involvement in Art Afloat generated an overwhelming response. During 2001/02 nearly 6,000 hours of volunteer

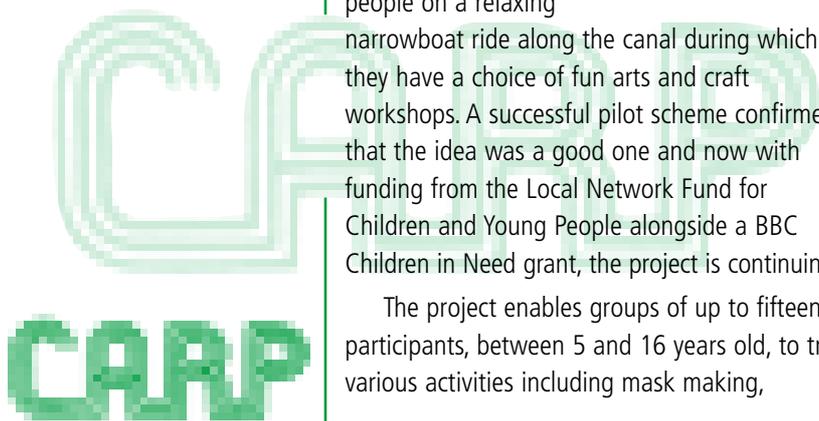


time were committed to the CARP project overall and the volunteers are well prepared for the tasks they carry out. A series of induction days welcome new volunteers to the project and each is given an Art Afloat training manual.

Regular training events are held for the arts workshop volunteers, both by CARP themselves and through partnerships with outside agencies such as the Birmingham Play Resource Centre.

‘On behalf of the volunteers...thanks for such a rich learning experience. I thoroughly enjoy my work with CARP and it is opportunities like these that make me feel like I’m progressing as an individual and an artist.’

This innovative project is benefiting local children and young people as well as developing the skills of a wide group of committed volunteers.



Contacts

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BOOTLE in Liverpool is rated by Government statistics as amongst the most deprived 2% of UK communities. Health Authority research evidence shows many local young people have unhealthy diets, smoke, drink alcohol to excess and take very little exercise.

A pilot project called 'Wise Up' based at the Christchurch Youth and Community Centre worked with local young people to examine their health and well-being. Aiming to improve their awareness of key health concerns, allows them to make their own lifestyle changes and engages them with the issues creatively. The project resulted in a group of young people who are now able to share their learning with others.

I made a big poster to warn other kids about smoking. I'm cooking healthy pizzas next week. Wise Up's good, it will get others to think a bit about how they live.

David aged 12

The group's weekly sessions had input from health professionals and other volunteers on healthy eating, exercise, the effects of smoking, drug and alcohol misuse as well as cookery sessions, sports and creative sessions on drama, poetry and music.

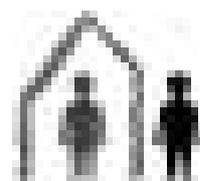
In only a few weeks my daughter's attitude to her diet and fitness has changed...I don't know what the secret is, but this project has given her a real boost.

Mrs Jones (local parent)

Much of this information has now been developed by the young people for distribution on a CD-ROM and the internet, increasing learning about website design and multimedia production techniques.

Along the way, the young people have also learned about the responsibilities of working together in a group.

Wise up – get healthy!



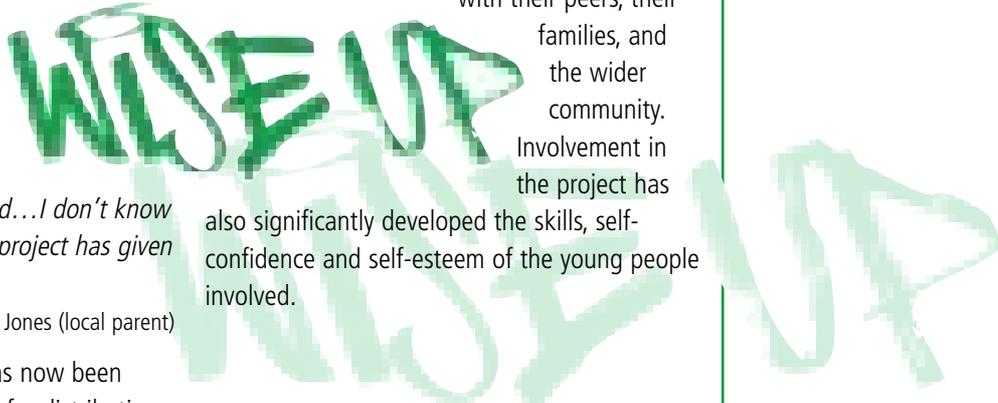
Peer Education Programme

A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People means this learning will now be put to good use by sharing it with other young people. A Peer Education Programme is being undertaken by the Wise Up project accredited through Weston Spirit, a national youth charity running personal development programmes. As well as the website, a series of face-to-face meetings will ensure the lessons learned from the project can be shared through sessions with other local youngsters.

Poverty and Health

There are well-established links between poverty and ill health. This project has, through education, enabled young people to make informed lifestyle choices, which they can share with their peers, their families, and the wider community. Involvement in the project has also significantly developed the skills, self-confidence and self-esteem of the young people involved.

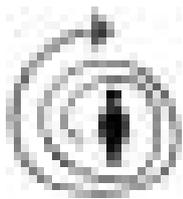
Health promotion project produces CD-ROM and website.



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Contacts



Linking up in London

A club for children with learning disabilities



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE with learning disabilities often find themselves excluded from mainstream social activities. They may not be experienced in social situations and lack confidence. There may be insufficient attention to their social development and communication, leading to these young people feeling isolated and having few friends.

Community Link-Up aims to integrate children and young people more fully into the social and recreational life of their community through friendship. They run the 1:1 club for adults, an integrated club where users with learning disabilities can meet and socialise with people from the wider community.

The 1:1 friendship project is provided through the recruitment, support and training of volunteers who form long-term friendships with people with learning disabilities.

‘I always have a nice time with Catherine’
Jayne, a service user talking about her friend

A number of parents of children with learning disabilities have heard about the

Community Link-Up 1:1 club operating in Harrow, north west London and have requested similar provision based on this model for their children.

A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has enabled the long awaited Junior 1:1 club to begin. A suitable centre had been identified as a venue for the monthly meetings, however to create a child friendly and stimulating area there was a need to invest in sports equipment, musical instruments, and arts and crafts materials as well as establishing a play area.

Training Volunteers

Additionally an induction training programme was required for all the new volunteers



recruited to take part in the club’s activities. This includes interviews with volunteers (and their parents or carers for those under 18) and taking up references and police checks.

Members of an Asian youth group – the Harrow Sai youth club – who have already

undergone some training will be participating and running the Junior club under the supervision of experienced 1:1 volunteers.

This project offers many benefits to all the participants. For the young people with learning disabilities they gain an opportunity to interact with their wider community leading to an increase in inclusion and independence. Their families get regular respite time on Friday evenings to spend with siblings and other family members. Volunteers have their first opportunity to contribute to community projects, which can also be accredited under the Millennium Volunteer scheme.

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DYSPRAXIA is a condition of the brain resulting in messages not being properly transmitted to the body. It affects at least 2% of the population in varying degrees and may result in poor posture or body awareness and some difficulty with physical co-ordination. Some people with Dyspraxia may exhibit poor short-term memory, they often forget tasks learned the previous day, children may be slow to learn to dress or feed themselves.

A local support group for parents of children with Dyspraxia was formed with an initial meeting of 5 families in Nottinghamshire in 1993. This self-managed group is now developing into an independent charity with over 1,500 families utilising the drop-in support services and telephone helpline on offer. As well as these activities a weekly movement club, an after-school club and a computer club are offered with regular youth club events taking place each month. These activities allow the children and young people opportunities to learn, and practice, new skills and participate in social activities in a safe and supported environment.

Sharing member's experiences through the training of school staff and other professionals and publishing newsletters and a website are also an important part of this group's work.

Summer playscheme events and camping and activity holidays give the young people a chance to attempt new activities whilst also offering some respite for carers.

Residential Activities

Young people with Dyspraxia may not be able to access mainstream residential activities due to their poor self-care skills and low self-esteem. A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has enabled a specially developed residential adventure programme to be provided for young people from Dyspraxia Connexion. The fully supported, yet demanding programme – based at Low Mill in North Yorkshire – has given this group of young people an unforgettable experience that develops their confidence through their own positive achievements in tackling new challenges.

Dyspraxia Connexion



‘Anne... gave me a torch, which gave me the freedom to walk unaided. In fact I did it so well George and I led the way! The feeling was indescribable. It was so romantic, because we stopped and looked at the constellations. I don't think I will ever forget this. Nothing on earth could stop me now, my body and soul were invigorated. This is what Low Mill is all about. I have done it!’

Andrea

Residential visit for children and young people with Dyspraxia



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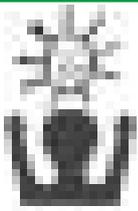
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Contacts



Building for the Future

Skill building with building skills

EAST CLEVELAND Youth Housing Project started out as an innovative partnership project and has now developed into a locally run trust, which aims to provide a network of affordable accommodation for young people in housing need.

The project is based in an isolated semi-rural area of small villages with high levels of poverty and deprivation. There are few training and employment opportunities for young people locally and travel to urban areas is difficult and costly. The project targets young people between 15 and 19 many of whom have low educational achievements and basic skills needs, often coupled with low self-esteem and very low aspirations.

Young people have access to local training opportunities in building skills through the regeneration of empty houses. Derelict properties are being brought back into use to provide accommodation for young people. Whilst rebuilding and refurbishing these homes young people are gaining practical building skills which can be put to use in future employment as well as developing a range of life skills.

‘I am a different person since I started my work placement with ECYHT. I know a lot more about the building trade, and it has given me the skills and encouragement to become a bricklayer when my placement is over.’

The project has also begun to offer a redecoration and refurbishment service to local community agencies, widening the experience gained by young people.

Personal Development

As a small number of participants are undertaking the programme at any one time, an informal one-to-one approach enables the project staff to identify opportunities for tailored personal development and arrange visits to similar projects. Young people have undertaken courses in areas as diverse as first aid, telephone techniques, fire safety and customer care.



Child Protection Policy

A small part of the Local Network Fund grant awarded was allocated to producing a child protection policy for the project and the training associated with its implementation. They benefited from the insights of a local agency brought in to work on producing the policy. Drafts were circulated amongst a dozen people by e-mail, amendments and updates were incorporated into a final policy that had input from project users. For this project the process of establishing a child protection policy was important in focusing attention on the ethos and values underpinning their work.

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STAFF ON THE NEONATAL UNIT at St George's Hospital in south west London, who care for babies both in the hospital, and when they go home, became very concerned about the lack of vital resources for some disadvantaged families. They identified the need to support families and babies who use the services of the new-born intensive and special care nurseries at the hospital.

To address the needs of these families, projects in three main areas, run by a voluntary group associated with the Neonatal Unit, have been identified and funded by the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People.

Travel Scheme

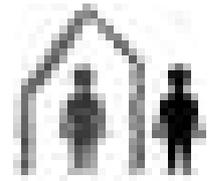
Some families who face economic disadvantage cannot afford the fares to travel to and from the hospital. Because the Neonatal Unit is the regional 'Centre of Excellence' for south east England as well as the immediate locality, caring for over 500 new-borns each year, many parents have to travel great distances. To enable families to visit babies in hospital on a regular basis a scheme has been established that makes a contribution towards travel costs for those struggling to meet these. This will ensure that the bonding process with parents and baby can proceed even if a premature baby is in hospital for a prolonged period.

Two car seats have also been purchased for loan to families to take babies home or to transfer to their local hospital, ensuring the safe transit of babies who are well enough to travel.

Baby Essentials

Several times a month the community nurses become aware of parents who are unable to provide even the most basic items to care for their baby back at home. They provide a 'going home' pack for these families including essential items such as warm cot bedding, baby clothing and a steriliser to ensure feeding equipment is clean and free from infection.

Making a Healthy Start



Translation Service

Many babies on the neonatal unit are born into families who have little or no knowledge of English. Many are refugees or recently settled in the UK. The unit provides a 'going home' booklet with vital information for parents about caring for their child at home with confidence. A Local Network Fund grant has enabled this to be translated into community languages such as Tamil, Somalian, Urdu and Punjabi.

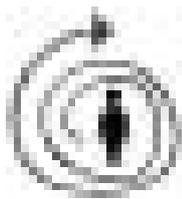
For all new born children the first months of life are a time when they are most vulnerable. For those whose health demands the extra support of hospital supervision the full focus of their parents attention is vital. This 'Friends' scheme, established as a voluntary organisation working alongside health professionals, ensures that parents, babies and all the family are given much needed support during a difficult time.



Volunteers supporting families with their new arrivals

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Contacts



Loaning Computer Equipment

Specialist equipment for visually impaired young people

THE GALLOWAY'S SOCIETY for the Blind has been established since 1867.

Although founded in Victorian times this forward looking organisation is providing the latest computer and communications technology to support visually impaired young people. The aim of the charity is to support people of all ages who have sight loss and to enable them to gain an independent lifestyle, at the same time as minimising the effects of reduced vision. This is done through providing a variety of services across Lancashire.

The society found that a large number of its users were older people. Those younger users of the service were initially only approaching them for advocacy and not getting involved in activities. Service provision for this younger group has now been developed and additionally the service is providing support to parents and young people attending mainstream schools. A monthly children's club operates enabling visually impaired young people to come together to socialise and participate in craft activities. This also provides an opportunity for their parents to meet and share experiences and information and collectively address issues of concern to them all.

A growing awareness of the needs of school students and their families coming from this group has led to the development of a new project supported by the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People.

Specialist Computer Equipment

The Galloway's Society has purchased five computers with specialist speech and magnification software. The equipment will be loaned out for use at home. Visually impaired children and young people can often struggle to keep up at school because of a lack of equipment and resources for homework and research. As a result of this project, young people are able to use appropriate technology to complete their homework assignments, access the internet, and learn to use computer applications.

Whilst adapted computer equipment provided at school may be suitable for visually impaired students it is too expensive for most families to install at home. For many families, the cost of having a computer at home at all may be prohibitive. By having the equipment on loan its suitability can be continually assessed, replacing and reusing where necessary.

Training and Support

The young people have access to the equipment for as long as they need it and are using it. When the computers are installed at the young person's home, training in use of the specialised applications is provided and telephone support from the tutors at the Galloway's centre is always available.

Access to this specialist equipment will enable children and young people the same opportunities to develop computer and communication skills, skills that enable them to feel more confident, more independent and better-integrated with their school colleagues.

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GOOLE is an area with much higher than the national average levels of unemployment. Many disadvantaged young families and families on benefit find it difficult to buy all the furniture and equipment they need at home, particularly those with young children and those recently housed in short term accommodation.

The Goole furniture and recycling scheme has, for three years, been assisting people on benefits or low income by providing recycled furniture. The furniture is provided free to users except for the delivery charge of £15.00 per van load, which makes a contribution to the project for the costs of diesel and insurance.

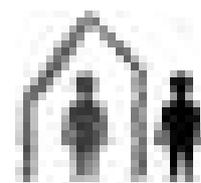
The Goole project recognised the need for the children of recently housed families to be provided with appropriate furniture and nursery equipment. They began to collect donations of good quality equipment for distribution to families with young children and now ensure that, where appropriate, deliveries include children's toys and books as well as the bedding and furniture needed in the family home.

The project relies heavily on volunteer involvement and has also been supported by placements of New Deal trainees undertaking some of the workload. A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has covered the core costs for a person to work part time as a project co-ordinator. This new position will ensure that the project's volunteers and placements are well trained and supported in the work they carry out.

Building Relationships

The project has also recently introduced a membership scheme with regular users issued with a small credit card sized membership card. The co-ordinator will manage this scheme and help to build up relationships between the project and its local client base; as well as building on the already strong links with local social services departments.

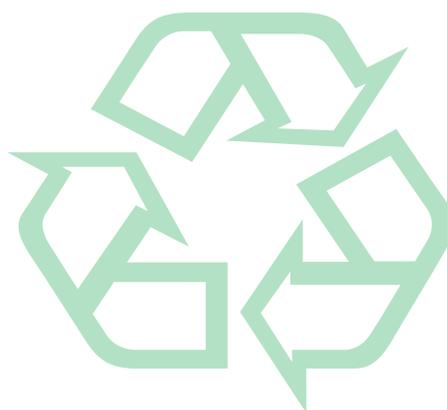
Goole Furniture Recycling Scheme



For the Future

There are plans to further develop a small computer/IT training programme that has developed as a result of some donated equipment being put to use by the project. Additional plans include introducing an exchange system where people could swap items of similar value through the project, for example one family whose child has outgrown a cot could make use of a sofa-bed that was being removed to make way for nursery items in another family's home. A further associated development is the plan to establish a bank of nursery equipment for loan to families unable to purchase cots, high-chairs and stair gates. A toy library scheme is also proposed.

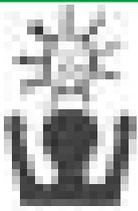
The Local Network Fund grant has allowed an extra person to commit time to the project with the aim of making these innovative schemes a reality, and making a difference for the young families of Goole.



Employing a part time project co-ordinator

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Contacts



Christmas Lantern Parade

A community celebration

OVER RECENT YEARS a small community event has taken place around the lighting of the Headland Christmas tree in North Hartlepool. It was felt that there was an opportunity to extend this event with wider community participation. Despite close family networks and a strong sense of local identity the area has very little large scale community participatory events. Christmas is a magical time for young people, yet no activities were specifically focused towards them. The intention was to stage an event that had input from the local junior schoolchildren, in North Hartlepool.

Wider community consultation settled on a Lantern Parade with a theme selected by the steering group of 'The Magi'. A grant from the Local Network Fund supported workshops in the six junior schools in the target area to design and produce Christmas lanterns.



Workshops lasting three days were conducted at each of the participating schools, from September through to November, with community workshops being facilitated to include those young people not directly participating through their school. So popular were these community workshops that they became oversubscribed. Approximately 550 young people and adults took part in the project overall.

Despite a positive marketing campaign, organisers were unsure how the wider community would receive the parade on December 2nd. However, nobody was prepared for the thousands of people who not only lined the route of the parade but also congregated at its journey's end to join in the countdown of the switching on of the Christmas lights, which was carried out by England under-21 cricket international Mike Gough.

As well as the parade there was also a community craft fair, street entertainment, music and fireworks.

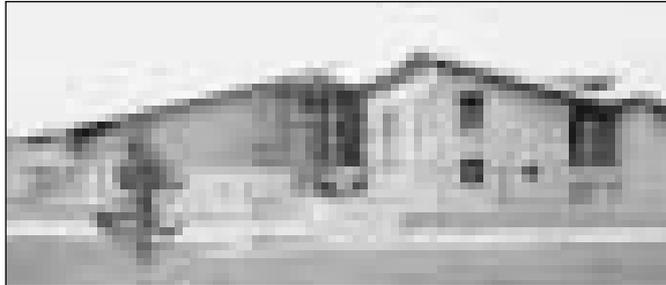
This unique event in the local cultural calendar provided local young people with the opportunity to play a creative part in a

celebration involving all sectors of the local community. As well as learning new arts-based skills with professional artists, the young people grew in confidence from their ownership and participation in the project. The parade strengthened relationships between the schools and other local community institutions.

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'ABILITY' is an initiative that was inspired by staff at the Children's Centre, Kingston-upon-Hull following children's disability week in 1997. The aim is to bring together young people with disabilities and/or special needs with those local groups and organisations supporting the philosophy of inclusion of people with disabilities into mainstream activities. The project focuses on the skills and abilities that the young people have. It encourages them to realise their potential to lead fulfilling lives by taking a lead in the planning and presentation of local events.



In an extension to their work, funded by the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People, they now aim to take a group of 12 young people, between 13 and 19 years old, away on a residential weekend to the Tim Parry and Johnathon Ball Trust Peace Centre in Warrington. The young people will use this opportunity to plan a larger programme of consultation about what changes could be made locally in service provision for disabled young people.

The project has a multi-agency steering committee including representatives from voluntary organisations and statutory sector bodies. The steering group have been actively involved in the detailed planning required to ensure the project's success.

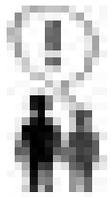
An invitation to young people to attend was issued and consultation organised with those young people expressing an interest. Meetings with their parents were also carried out to ensure they had an opportunity to voice any concerns and discuss issues related to the trip.

A series of social events with the young people have been planned to give them an opportunity to meet other members of the group and get to know one another in advance of the residential. These fun events suggested by the young people themselves included a fish-and-chips tea, sports and games, karaoke and ten-pin bowling.

Assessing the Risks

Members of the 'Ability' steering group undertook a comprehensive risk assessment in advance of final planning of the residential weekend. They

A Voice for Disabled Young People



Planning a residential event

travelled to the venue and checked in detail every aspect of the proposed programme. As a result, the group has changed plans to travel by train and will go in a coach instead due to the access challenges set by the rail transport system. Thorough planning has also taken place with the selected venue who are able to offer fully accessible facilities to cater for the group.

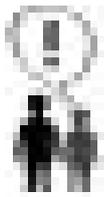
The identification of suitable enablers, to accompany the young people, involved writing a job description and asking for volunteers to identify their skills and abilities. A matching process then allocated enablers to a nominated individual; further meetings and social events allowed them to get to know one another in advance of the trip.

NSPCC staff on site at the Peace Centre will facilitate one full day of the three-day event; it was felt that working with an outside agency would ensure that the young people's views were clearly expressed, and their voices would be heard.

Throughout the project, attention to detail and thorough planning ensured that events ran smoothly and without stress for the young people involved, leaving them able to concentrate solely on their participation and contribution to the project.

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Involving young citizens equally

Supporting young people's involvement in local services



THE IYCE PARTNERSHIP (Involving Young Citizens Equally) was established in 1997 to develop ways in which children and young people could influence the practice, provision and policy development of local public services. IYCE is a partnership between Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council, local health services and Save the Children Fund. The initiative aims to change services from within, creating long-term cultural change that values involvement of children and young people as a routine way of working. IYCE is underpinned by the Kirklees Children's Plan, 'Young Citizens', which states that:

‘you have the right to have your say and to be taken seriously about things that matter to you’

Right 6

The Local Network Fund for Children and Young People provided an opportunity for IYCE to involve young people in financial decision-making processes. The aim was to establish a young person's panel, to make joint decisions with adults about the allocation of Local Network Fund grants in Yorkshire and Humberside.

Informal 'training' workshops were held across West Yorkshire outside of traditional

work/school hours. Sessions included information on what the Local Network Fund was all about including the grant application criteria; expectations of young people on the panel and what young people could expect from the process.

Following these informal sessions a panel of young people made recommendations to an adult panel. Plain language was used and information was broken down into 'bite-size chunks' so that it was accessible to young people. Application forms were condensed, summarised and presented in a user-friendly

way to aid the decision-making process; original applications were, however used as a constant reference.

Adults, on the grants panel, were supportive of the young people's recommendations, considered their views

and rationale and endorsed each recommendation.

New Challenges

Involving young people grant making posed new challenges resulting in proposals for change. Introducing young people into the arena inevitably challenges the status quo, and this is something that IYCE views as positive.

This project developed a method that could be repeated and is also transferable to other settings. It involves: Outreach; Information; 'Training' (informal); Decision-making; Evaluation; Feedback. Its simplicity is based on good practice and common sense.

The project enabled young people to contribute to something significant, gain new skills and knowledge and have fun.



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The north Halifax area has a higher than average incidence of unemployment, young people of the area suffer from low educational attainment levels and low expectations of their future ability to access training and employment opportunities.

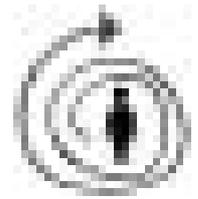
The Jobmatch project, supported by local regeneration agency the North Halifax Partnership, is attempting to address some of these issues by engaging year 11 students in activities which will allow them to raise youth issues and discuss how future funds should be used to tackle them.

Jobmatch devised a series of events held at the regenerated Halifax Shay Stadium, home to both Halifax Town FC and the Blue Sox Rugby League team. The meetings focus on the young people's continued interest in school; their future training opportunities and the support needed for young people to start work. The events bring together pupils from north Halifax secondary schools not only to highlight issues that they felt were important, but also to offer their realistic solutions.

The events were supported with input from the local careers service, volunteers from the regeneration partnership board, school teachers and trained mentors. Several Blue Sox team members also participated, facilitating team-building and communication workshops.

At the end of the session, the students completed evaluation forms, a dissemination event was arranged to feed back the collated input. A panel was invited to the dissemination event and pupils were able to put questions to key decision makers about the allocation of funds.

Halifax Jobmatch



Small Grants for Projects

From this event each of the schools represented were awarded a small grant through the Education Business Partnership scheme to conduct their own projects. These projects included refurbishing the year 11 common room at St Catherine's School, improving the expressive arts studio at The Ridings School and constructing an outdoor study area at Holy Trinity.

As well as providing information and recommendations that will be utilised to improve future services for young people, individual participants in the programme have gained self-confidence and skills.

Young people discuss their future careers

jobmatch

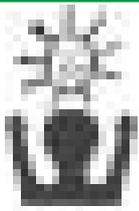
jobmatch



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Achievement Through the Arts

A selection of creative ideas from arts-based projects

There are many examples of arts-based projects funded by the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People. Through activities as diverse as drama, dance, music, mime, pottery, puppetry and performance young peoples lives have been enhanced by several innovative schemes.

Diversionsary Projects

Liverpool's Kensington Fields Community Association provides arts and drama as diversionary opportunities for young people aged 13–19 years that have been identified as 'at risk' of offending or exclusion from school. The project workers found that younger siblings were often brought along to the sessions in the care of their older brothers or sisters. To provide a full service for this younger age range (between 8 and 13) a Local Network Fund grant is funding a new programme. A 12-week course ending in a stage performance with a role for each young person has been developed. The programme provides participants with inspiration, new opportunities and experiences before developing a production of their own. It includes visits to the theatre and local museums – including the Beatles Museum – offering young Liverpoolians the chance to

learn about some of the culture of their own city for the first time.

Another Liverpool-based project, this time at the professional Unity Theatre, is enabling young members of the local community to experience and become involved with the performing arts. They are providing a series of 11-week arts-based workshops in different disciplines including dance, drama, music and arts and crafts for some of the most disadvantaged young people from the inner city areas of Liverpool. The workshops are designed to be non-competitive in nature and focus on creative play. At the start of a course, the young people together establish their own ground rules and themes. Around 40 to 50 young people between 5 and 13 years old attend each weekend. With funding from the Local Network Fund these very popular workshops are now able to extend their provision and offer a two week 'Summer Splatts!' workshop. The Unity Theatre actively encourages young hearing-impaired people to become involved in their fully integrated workshop sessions. This builds on their established links with Merseyside School for Deaf People. A British Sign Language interpreter is employed by the project. This gives an added dimension to the programme and provides an opportunity for young people with differing abilities and needs to meet and share their experiences. As a result of working together all the young people can now sign their own name and sign simple greetings, as the project develops their understanding of BSL and confidence in using it grows.

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Integrated Arts Project

Arts projects can provide the basis for young people of different abilities and experiences to work together and learn about their peers.

One example of an integrated arts project is the Solihull Leisure Opportunities Scheme. About half the young people, have a recognised learning difficulty. These young people do not have the same opportunities that their peers without disability have, and many will need a supported environment to participate.

A grant from the Local Network Fund has enabled young people, both with disabilities and without, to explore their own interests and participate in performing arts in a mainstream setting. A series of taster sessions with professional tutors have allowed the young people to experience poetry, dance, music, movement and mime and improvised drama, and develop their own performances.

*‘I liked it because I got more confidence;
I enjoyed it because we had a laugh.’*

One unforeseen outcome of the scheme was that a couple of the children from the mainstream schools began attending the special needs youth club with friends they had made through the project. Overall, all the young people gained new skills as well as increasing self-confidence and self-esteem. In addition, mixing with children whose needs are different has given both sets of young people wider life experiences and broadened attitudes to take into adult life.



Pottery as Therapy

Work with young people, some of whom are experiencing physical disabilities, was the motivation behind Hull-based Bilton Grange Community Association's Arts and Crafts project. Many of the young people are not attending mainstream school; the project attempts to re-engage them and encourage them to return to school or college, or to find paid work. Local Network Funds have extended the range of opportunities on offer by providing a potters-wheel and other pottery equipment giving young people the chance to take part in new and interesting arts and crafts activities. There is a long-held understanding of the therapeutic effects of working with clay. For the disadvantaged and stressed target group this



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project has identified, there is the chance to learn a new skill and develop their self-confidence.

Rural Arts

However, it is not just in urban settings that some young people are excluded from contact with the arts. Rossendale in rural Lancashire is a collection of small towns and isolated villages with a limited transport infrastructure making access to arts activities difficult. Against this backdrop, The Horse and Bamboo Theatre Centre has been awarded Local Network Funding to provide opportunities for young people to participate together in creative workshops. The grant has meant that local young people aged 8 to 16 are able to have high quality input from theatre professionals. Workshops have included masks, mime, percussion and music in theatre.

Using schools, residential and care homes as well as their own well-equipped centre, a large number and a wide range of local young people

are able to access the workshop sessions. Special events linked to the theatre's own performance and touring programme are offered alongside themed Youth Theatre weeks and young people's puppet performances.

Providing an activity, which is deterring young people's involvement in petty crime, vandalism and substance abuse as well as enhancing educational experiences and developing new skills, this project has a significant impact for local youngsters otherwise isolated from arts activities.



Powerpoint Puppets

Younger groups of children are also experiencing the benefits of an arts project supported by the Local Network Fund. A performing arts worker has been employed for 12 hours a week to oversee a development of the Powerpoint Family Project in Longhill, east Hull. The aim is to provide a safe and high quality environment for young people to develop music and drama performance using puppets.

Language development and associated communications skills amongst children starting local nursery schools were identified as a learning need. The local primary schools were keen for this project to be developed; they have provided opportunities for performances at school assemblies and special events. There are regular requests for the group to attend lessons in local schools and they have started drama clubs in two primary schools. In addition, the project visits toddlers' groups and holds sessions in the local library and community centres.

As well as aiding communications, the drama activity is aiming to develop the young

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people's experiences and raise their expectations.

Puppet shows can very subtly introduce young people to significant issues. By copying the puppet's actions children comb their own hair and brush their teeth in a session about 'looking after yourself'.

The puppets prove very popular with youngsters. One three-year-old boy who had been identified as having a short attention span was captivated by a puppet at one session and spent 15 minutes interacting with the group through the puppet, in speech and actions.

The Powerpoint project set themselves an ambitious target for the number of contacts with children and young people in their first year. The popularity of the project locally means that they are going to accomplish their targets within the first three months of operation.

Sky-Hi Puppets

Older children too love to use puppets. For the J-Club members at Gravesend Methodist church in Kent a Local Network Fund grant has enabled new puppets and a performance stage to be purchased so that the children of 9 and above can perform to younger members of the club. The J-Club is a weekly after-school activities club for 5 to 11 year olds. The puppetry project gives children the opportunity to learn a new skill, and to put it into practice by performing in public. Performances are planned in Dartford's Orchard Theatre and at Gravesend Theatre during their Autumn Youth Festival.

The Local Network Fund grant has enabled an entirely new project, the Sky-Hi Puppet theatre, to be formed. Puppeteer Peter Cooper who runs the group said:

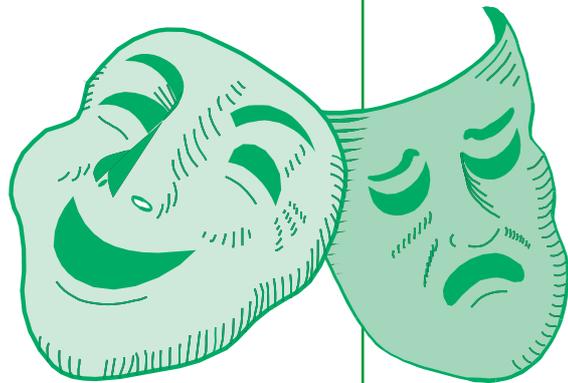
“The name Sky-Hi comes from the letters KYHI – Keep Your Hand In – meaning keep practising! Puppeteering is hard work and it makes your arms ache if you don't practice regularly with the puppets. However, we haven't worked out what the 'S' at the beginning stands for yet.”

Some children may feel they can't do anything well, whilst the puppet theatre will give them the opportunity to learn the technical skills, most children find they can put 'life' into

the puppets quite quickly and simply, they then use them to re-tell stories. These activities can lead to improved communication skills and confidence in newly acquired abilities.

Children's Voices

Art and drama-based projects, as well as assisting children with their basic language and communications skills, can also provide a medium for young people to express opinions and ideas of their own. 'Children's Voices in Falmouth', a two year project supported by Local Network Fund money, aims to engage children and young people between 10 and 19 in theatre activities and provide them with an opportunity to work collectively with their peers and voice issues of concern to them. The project facilitators Cascade Theatre in Education have a track record of working with young people in Cornwall, in and out of school developing issue-based drama on health and social issues including underage drinking, substance misuse, and bullying.



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A pilot scheme identified that 80% of young people in the target area of Beacon in Falmouth come from homes in receipt of some form of benefits payment. Cultural as well as financial poverty is in evidence. To open up opportunities for children in these circumstances, the work is delivered in the form of structured workshop sessions which begin by developing self-esteem, confidence, team-working skills and trust. The aim is to use the workshops to have fun, break down barriers and encourage social inclusion.

The main goal is involving young people in a process that is stimulating and challenging, and allows them to voice their own concerns.

Learning Through Music

The Local Network funded Toucan project based in the former coalfield area of Mansfield provides opportunities for excluded young people to develop their artistic skills.

Toucan is a group that aims to encourage young people's access to education using music as a medium. They have established a band and are developing a young person's orchestra. The project is an ongoing education and music, arts and dance initiative. In the short term, they are working towards a debut performance during the Queen's Golden Jubilee year.

In advance of the performance, the project is providing a series of after-school, and weekend music and drama sessions. In addition to music practice, these sessions allow the young people the opportunity to do their school homework in a supported environment.

Local Network Fund funding has enabled Toucan to operate an instrument loan scheme. This is giving young people the opportunity to take home instruments for practice without any rental fee. Clearly, this relieves the financial burden on parents who would otherwise have to find a significant deposit and regular hire fees. This free rental scheme and the availability of free tuition at the after-school and weekend sessions has opened up musical performance to many young people who would otherwise be unable to access it.

Arts and Culture

The arts can provide young people with a vital link to the heritage and culture of many of Britain's minority ethnic communities. Navrang Arts based in Stockton-on-Tees promote the arts of the Asian subcontinent through traditional folk dancing. A grant from the Local Network Fund has enabled them to develop and stage performances of Asian Folk dances. Presenting the dances and performances in front of multicultural audiences breaks down barriers and can aid cultural understanding.

Many young people from Asian ethnic backgrounds do not have the opportunity to experience their own rich cultural and artistic heritage. Whilst learning about this history,

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young people learn dance, develop confidence, creative skills, team-working skills and also make new friends.

Using Technology

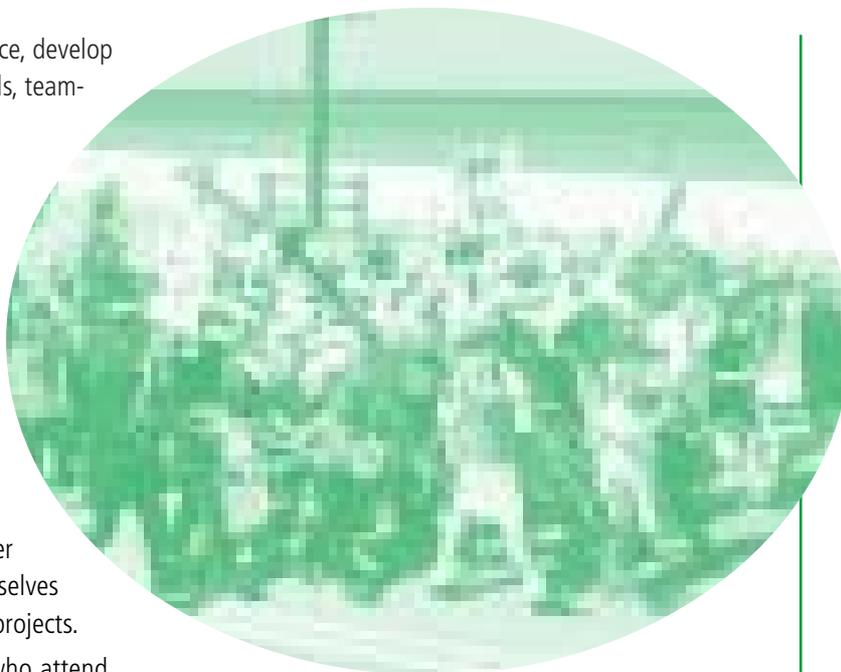
It is not only through the traditional art forms that young people are able to find a means of expression and learn new skills. Several newer technologies lend themselves to creative, arts-based projects.

The young people who attend Pocklington Youth Club in Yorkshire ran a Community Radio station on a limited 28-day licence. Significant funding from the Local Network Fund, added to funds from Comic Relief and Commedia (The Community Media Association), enabled young people to develop and run their own local radio station. A project such as this will develop very specific technical and performing skills as well as team-building, confidence and self-esteem.



Video

Video too can provide young people with the means to tell their own stories. In Hull, the Creatix Community Video project has been awarded a Local Network Fund grant to establish a video training resource for disadvantaged young people. In both local and national education 'league tables', Hull's young



people have been identified as lacking in arts provision. The project aims to bring together young people from schools and youth clubs across Hull to provide accredited training in film and video for over-16s. The resource will include tutors, filming and editing equipment.

Two Wheels and A Baby

Manchester youth group, Community Rites, has emerged as a self-governing youth drama organisation from projects based at the Contact Theatre. They have used Local Network Funding to produce a video drama, developed and designed by young people based on themes they chose themselves of disability and teenage pregnancy. 'Two Wheels and a Baby', is an improvised drama that tells the story of

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Chantal, a 16-year-old who is trying to decide whether to go ahead with her unplanned pregnancy.

The group reflects a very culturally and ethnically diverse mix, so wide ranges of different experiences were brought together in the final production.

‘I learned more than I have from any other project, I really enjoyed working with this group of people.’



musical soundtrack, video-cover designer and film editor. The young people had the unique opportunity to experience working on their own film alongside a professional crew.

‘This was the first drama I had shot and it taught me more than any course in terms of production techniques, camera skills and the environment on a professional shoot.’

Many of the young people involved have gone into other education or paid work as a direct result of the project;

The production team included two wheelchair users, one, Peter, who plays the part of ‘Wheels’ a local wheeler-dealer with a difference said

‘I was never made to feel disabled on this project. And I think I could never give to Two Wheels and a Baby what it gave me.’

Overall 40 young people participated directly in the project taking on roles including actor, writer, film-crew assistant, costume designer, composer of

this includes acting jobs as well as technical work.

The finished video, produced to broadcast standard, was well received at its premiere at Manchester’s Contact Theatre. It has already been enjoyed at many school and youth club showings. The film will also feature in a young peoples film festival in Sheffield.

Impact of Arts Projects

As can be seen from this diverse range of projects, the arts can play a significant part in tackling inequalities that are experienced by children in some of our most deprived communities. Grants from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People have both funded new activities and allowed existing projects to continue and develop. As well as the educational and creative opportunities from participating in activities that extend the National Curriculum, young people experience a wide range of benefits from becoming involved in arts activities.

Diversionsary aspects of some of these projects prevent bored youngsters with ‘nothing to do’ getting involved in petty crime, substance abuse and vandalism, others encourage a return to school for non-attenders. Many projects provide young people with a sense of self worth and accomplishment through succeeding in a new area.

Setting ground rules and learning team-working skills is an invaluable lesson and quite

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different to the experience of working in a group in a school setting. Many of these group-working skills are essential for future employment. Working in informal groups comprised of young people with differing abilities and needs has a beneficial effect for all participants who learn to co-operate on joint projects.

As part of the projects detailed here, a range of very specific skills have been learned. Achieving some of these more technical skills may stimulate participants to explore career prospects using expertise developed during these projects.

Through developing abilities and an interest in drama, arts, music or performance many of these young people have found a voice and a means of expressing themselves and their concerns.

Local Network Funding has already given many children and young people the ability to enjoy arts and participate in culture as a creator, not simply as a passive consumer. Poverty can be tackled through widening experience and raising expectations of the many young people who have benefited from participating in these projects.



Computers on the Move

Leicestershire mobile computer room

LEICESTERSHIRE CLUBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE is the local umbrella group representing 28 affiliated clubs with a membership of 3,500 children and young people. They are part of a national organisation, The National Association of Clubs for Young People. The aim is to provide educational and leisure opportunities to assist all members to realise their full potential and thereby become the responsible citizens of tomorrow.

LCYP provides young people with opportunities for physical, creative and social activities. As part of this work the organisation runs an annual Young People County Camp which brings together about 100 young people from across Leicestershire to meet, have fun, and try new activities.

During the camp held in August 2001, one of the activities offered was computing. A computer, digital camera and printer were set up to enable 'hands on' sessions using the technology.

Volunteer Involvement

One of the young volunteers responsible for the computer equipment, Arran Smith, saw at first hand the difficulties of providing a positive experience of using computer technology outdoors, particularly when camping overnight. Arran then approached the LCYP executive

committee with a proposal to develop a mobile computer room to provide facilities for young people to experience working with this technology not only at annual camps, but also through regular trips to all the affiliated clubs throughout the year.

The plan involves purchasing eight lap top computers, a digital camera and webcam, and colour printer. The computers will be connected by a network which will allow access to the internet.

All the equipment will be stored in a secure cabinet, which can be transported to each location in turn using the Adventure Bus already in operation through LYCP.



Whilst young people's access to computer equipment is increasing at school this development encourages young people to work on their own projects outside the National Curriculum such as building web pages, designing posters and preparing newsletters. The computers may also assist young people in gaining employment, as they will be available for producing CVs and job application letters.

A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has enabled this project to move on to the next phase. Arran has now been employed by LCYP as a peer educator. He is setting up small achievable projects at each of the clubs in turn. The aim is to increase the skills, confidence and self-assurance of the young people who will benefit from being involved with a young person as peer educator and role model. Project participants are also able to use this work as part of the NACYP accredited Keystone Youth Achievement Award Scheme.

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FOR MANY CHILDREN already in school, and those yet to start, use of information and communication technology will become an everyday part of their lives in education and in later life in work. The need to accomplish expertise in ICT will in future become recognised as a basic skill alongside literacy and numeracy. Yet, many children do not have access to the equipment needed to achieve this competence at home or in their local libraries.

Parents and staff of the Lenham Acorns Pre-school identified the need for young children to experience computer technology. The pre-school caters for children from 2½, to 5 years of age and is based in a small village community with limited access to learning facilities.

A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has enabled a computer to be purchased and installed as well as educational software.

“One thing that will stay with me is the excitement on the children’s faces when the computer was first set up. That excitement hasn’t diminished to this day!”

Developing Skills

Using the computer enhances the development of the children’s hand-eye co-ordination skills as well as providing an early introduction to the use of a computer mouse as a control device.

Educational software, also purchased with the LNF grant, has provided the children with computer-based learning opportunities for literacy, numeracy and other developmental skills.

Researching the Needs

When applying for a grant for equipment it is important to research the use, and to take into account additional items that might also be required, such as an appropriately sized computer workstation, a keyboard with lower case letters and a colour printer.

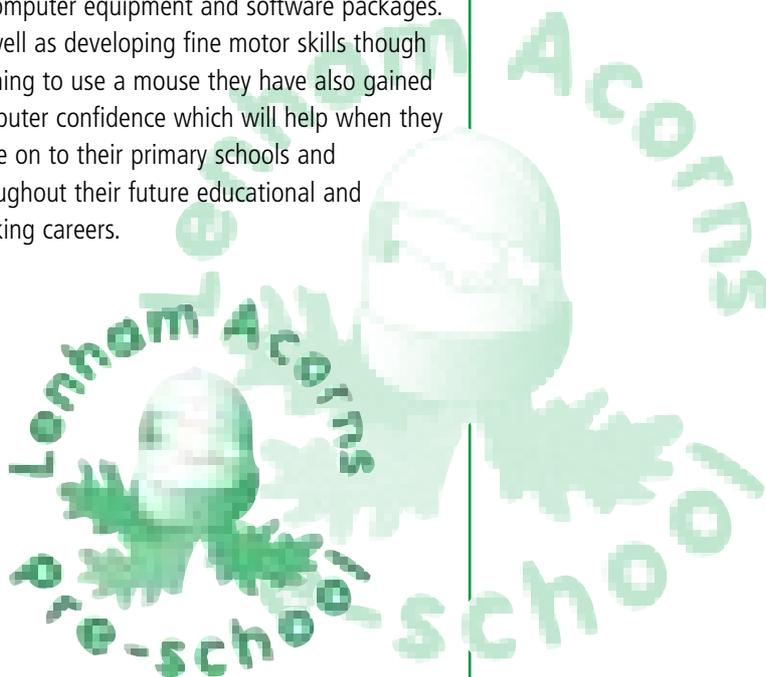
The computer enables the staff to plan and deliver parts of the foundation stage of the National Curriculum within a technology framework. The staff at Lenham Acorns have indicated that the computer has made a significant difference to the pre-school children;

From Little Acorns...



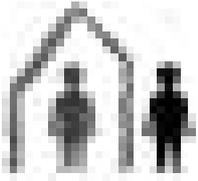
Computer equipment for pre school children

they have quickly become competent in the use of computer equipment and software packages. As well as developing fine motor skills though learning to use a mouse they have also gained computer confidence which will help when they move on to their primary schools and throughout their future educational and working careers.



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Leyland Young Mums

Support and information for teenage mums and mums-to-be

AN INNOVATIVE NEW CONCEPT in teenage support and advice was put into practice when the appointment of Carol Schultz (Senior Family Worker for the Leyland Project), led to the identification of small numbers of unsupported young pregnant women who failed to attend traditional parentcraft and antenatal sessions. The project formed brings together the whole scope of pregnancy from antenatal advice through to parentcraft training

The Leyland project was established ten years ago as a partnership between Leyland Baptist Church and Spurgeon's Child Care (an international child care agency). It initially concentrated on youth and community work on the Wade Hall Estate in Leyland, Lancashire, later moving into schools and family support work operating from two estate-based centres. Part of the Community work included a focus on teenage homelessness. The work has grown and now runs as a separate charity S.L.E.A.P. (emergency accommodation) and E.L.S. (extended lodgings scheme).

A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has funded two 12-week programmes, which address the specific needs of pregnant teenagers. Designed for young women between 13 and 19 the programme includes information on sexual health and can also be applied to non-pregnant teenagers.

The grant has provided materials for antenatal and postnatal training and discussions in small groups, some creative materials and the sessional salary costs of a qualified midwife and nursery nurse for crèche cover.

Other courses provided by the Springfields Centre include positive parenting, assertiveness, baking on a budget and beauty on a budget. Regular sessions include 'time-out', where young children are looked after at the centre for two hours to give their mothers a chance for a little time to themselves. Carer and toddler groups also meet regularly

Building a Network

Establishing a regular group who meet together to share similar experiences helps these young women to build their own network of shared support. It also establishes a forum for the young women to direct their own learning, benefiting the children, whose parents' needs are being met.

Contacts

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MEN UNITED is a volunteer-run, self-help support group for fathers caring for children. This Nottingham-based community project seeks to improve access to services and appropriate care for fathers and their families. Parenting training and support services are frequently geared towards mothers rather than fathers often resulting in a lack of support for single dads.

Men United began in 1994 when a father who was caring for his six-month-old son was referred to a social services family centre. He felt isolated in a 'woman's world' where all support was aimed at the child's welfare with none for him as a single father. He began to make contact with other fathers dropping off their children at the family centre and slowly they began to talk about the lack of fatherhood support services. With the help of a male social work student a small group of men began to meet weekly at the family centre, this core group rapidly grew and now Men United operates as a self-help community organisation and has just achieved charitable status.

The group provides a safe environment where fathers can share feelings and experiences with others and encourage an active participation in the nurturing and development of children.

All fathers, single, divorced, married, step and non-resident are welcome at the group's weekly drop-in sessions which feature topic-led discussions determined by the group members. In addition, the group aims to relieve families in distress by providing members with a range of services including, a befriending service, outreach work with other community organisations and personal support and advocacy for men facing child access claims or welfare rights and educational issues in connection with their children.

There is also a focus on the personal development of the men who are members of the group by creating a positive identity of fathers. Accredited training in health and social issues, including parenting skills and anger management is also offered.

Men United



Social Activities

As well as the range of family support activities, sports and social events are organised to ensure that fathers can spend time with their families and socialise with other fathers.

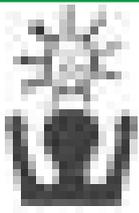
A grant from the Local Network Fund has enabled the group to plan a 'once in a lifetime' trip for children and their fathers to visit London, travel on the London Eye and enjoy the sights and excitement of a day-out in the capital. Families will have an opportunity to socialise and share a memorable event. The young people, often excluded from social activities, will benefit from an event that lifts their horizons and gives them a chance to encounter something beyond their usual experience, thus raising their expectations.

Supporting fathers and their families



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Contacts



Playing Music, Building Bridges

Asian Arts, Music and Textiles workshops in Schools

THE MULTI ASIAN ARTS CENTRE is a voluntary, Asian arts development organisation. MAAC has been involved in providing high quality arts work for several years and now operates from a unique Asian Arts Centre in Rochdale. The aim is to develop quality creative arts activities, events, training and awareness of Asian arts in the north west region, and across the UK.

MAAC works to promote and develop Asian arts throughout the region in collaboration with local authorities, arts organisations, schools community centres and individual artists.

A Local Network Fund grant has enabled a major project to begin with four schools across the most disadvantaged areas of Rochdale. The particular focus is on those schools with no music provision. The project is running a series of music workshops for young people to learn skills in Asian music. The intention is to involve all sectors of the local community and to produce music using western musical instruments as well as Asian.

New Skills

The young people targeted for inclusion in the project are those who already have some musical ability, but limited opportunity to take this forward. The project enables young people to extend their involvement and contribute to educational development through the building of new skills.

The project will culminate in a performance hosted by one of the participating schools. The young people will come together to share their learning over the course of the project and to perform in front of an audience of their peers, parents community members and the media.

The performance will also feature input from the tutors and professional musicians who have been leading the workshop sessions.

Textile Project

Alongside the musical performance, MAAC is also running a textile project with two local primary schools. At a series of six school-based workshops children have produced textile backdrops for the stage to be used at the music performance event. Children from the feeder primary schools have an involvement in the final event and will be invited to see the music performed. This provides an opportunity for the younger children to get involved in events at senior schools in advance of them attending and build their confidence. It is hoped that this early introduction will captivate the interest of the younger children in getting involved as a musician when they attend the secondary school.

By stimulating young people's interest and understanding of Asian music and arts the project hopes to increase their knowledge and self-confidence as well as building bridges between communities – an important factor in Britain's northern towns in recent months.

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FOR MANY RURAL COMMUNITIES the provision of activities that extend the school curriculum, and offer parents the opportunity to get involved with learning alongside their children, are limited. Travelling to a central location where resources and equipment are provided is not always possible for families living in isolated communities.

The Omnibus Project operates a double-decker Community Playbus in north east Norfolk – working directly with families, playgroups, schools, local authorities and other organisations involved in community outreach work. The Omnibus Project has established practical ways of linking with and enhancing, existing services to provide families with the opportunity of open access, learning through play sessions. The aim is to enable participants to use the resources on the bus in an environment that is relaxed and fun.

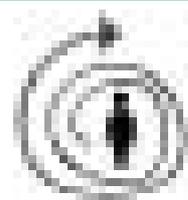
The bus has a selection of imaginative play equipment including construction toys, games, books, an internal telephone role-play system as well as an Information and Communications Technology (ICT) area equipped with five laptop computers, a printer, scanner and photocopier as well as digital camera and video equipment, laminator and bookbinder.

Family Learning

The work of the Omnibus Project is based on a family learning approach. The project aims to work with families in an inclusive way, providing activities that are relevant to parents, carers and children. Sessions invite families on to the bus to use the ICT equipment and other facilities not always available at home

Some of these sessions are focused on adults and ICT, offering parents and carers the

Getting On – The Omnibus Project



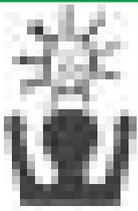
opportunity to use the equipment in a group setting. The project operates across a wide area within a fifteen-mile radius of North Walsham. There are up to 20 sites that the bus visits regularly with other venues providing one-off activities and events. Schools provide many of the locations for the visits during term time with other venues being used during the holidays. Sessions on the bus last around two hours to give the participants enough time to familiarise themselves with the equipment and make progress at their own pace. Providing a quality introduction to ICT equipment in a supportive environment has proven beneficial to many people, young and old alike, developing the concept of educating both children and adults.

Mobile community playbus project in rural north Norfolk



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Contacts



Improving the Environment

Birmingham environment clubs visit the countryside



BIRMINGHAM'S ALUM ROCK AND SALTLEY AREAS have a large number of children and young people under 16 many from minority ethnic communities. However, this young population has very little safe open space available for them to use. The general standard of the local environment is poor with considerable areas of dereliction; litter and waste give an appearance of neglect and decay.

Unemployment is amongst the highest in Birmingham and housing conditions are poor. The economic, social and cultural factors mean that few of the local children and young people travel to access the green spaces that do exist outside their immediate neighbourhoods. These factors all contribute to making it difficult for young people to develop positive attitudes to their surroundings.

In an attempt to address these issues a new project has been developed by the local residents association, in partnership with CSV

environment, that will enable school based environment clubs to visit the countryside and meet individuals such as rangers and wardens who are looking after the natural environment.

The aim of the project is to raise awareness and understanding of environmental issues amongst the children and young people, but also to inspire them to consider improvements for wildlife and recreation that may relate to their home areas. A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has enabled not only the visits to the countryside but will also support small scale projects within the group's local neighbourhoods such as installing picnic tables, benches and creating wildlife habitats.



A Sense of Ownership

This project enables young people to develop new interests and learn new skills whilst taking positive steps to improve their own local environment, instilling a sense of 'ownership' and pride in their local area.

The young people participating in the project have an opportunity to take a hands-on role in a real project, make informed decisions about how they would like to improve their environment and implement their own ideas.

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THE PHOENIX CENTRE is an independent charity that aims to provide appropriate playgroup facilities for children with varied development problems. Additionally the centre enables parents to meet together, form support networks and collectively voice their needs.

The Centre provides a service to the local community of Dudley, West Midlands. It links into all areas involving the health, welfare and education of pre-school children with special needs. The project works with children and helps parents to understand their needs before they are assessed by the statutory services at three years old. The aim is to help those who have special needs, gain sufficient independence and confidence to then integrate into local authority nurseries and mainstream schools.

This is achieved through developing the children's social skills, self-help abilities, hand-eye co-ordination, concentration, cognitive skills, language, and listening.

The project also aims to give support to parents and provides them with an opportunity for involvement with their child's education and development within an informal environment.

Parent Support Groups

Specific needs are catered for through convening groups of parents and their children who share a common condition such as Down's Syndrome, autism and severe communication disorders. Specialist staff participate in these groups. Practical activities are discussed; parents share ideas and celebrate success together. Specialist training is available from the qualified staff.



The Phoenix Centre



Extending Long Term Support

For 25 years, The Phoenix Centre has been providing support and services to the parents of local children with special needs. The project has grown and developed over this period by responding to locally identified needs. A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has enabled this important work to continue and has allowed staff to increase the numbers of local children, and their families,

who can be offered the much needed support services.

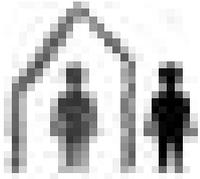
‘We are now able to help young children, at present on our waiting list, to fulfil their potential.’

Pre-school children with special needs



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Contacts



Young Savers

Credit Union
extends savings
services to young
people

SINCE 1997 the Pilch Lane and District Credit Union has been providing opportunities for savings and low-cost loans to people in the Pilch Lane area of Liverpool 14 and 36. Initially operating through the local Anglican and Catholic Churches, the Credit Union now occupies shop-front premises. Volunteers are actively involved in running the credit union and, subject to funding, it is planned to expand the staff and take on more paid workers.

The group has had requests to extend their service to the younger age range in the area from local children, parents and teachers. Consequently, they have established a Young Savers Club. For local young people who want to start saving Banks and Building Societies can prove prohibitive, requiring minimum deposits of £20 or even £100 for some accounts.

Getting The Savings Habit

With a grant from the Local Network Fund the group has set up a constituted Young People's Savings Club. The aim is to introduce a credit union savings (not loans) ethos to young people. A small dividend will be distributed to the young savers at the end of the year. The project hopes to nurture a culture of 'saving' in an area where it is traditionally out of the reach of most people to plan a savings strategy.

By participating in the Young Savers club, the credit union is attacking debt culture at an early age as young people learn the benefits of regular saving. The Young Savers Club welcomes

small deposits of 20p or 50p per week, which the young people can see quickly growing into significant amounts to be spent on holidays or saved up for a special purchase.

Sessions in Schools

The Young Savers project initially ran from the Credit Union's own premises but now regular weekly sessions are held in local schools. The savings sessions are held first thing in the school day – as young people arrive for school. This ensures there is less possibility of the money taken in for deposit being lost, or spent during the day.

The area of operation for the credit union has six schools, two secondary schools and four primaries with potentially 2000 young people in the catchment area. It is planned to involve older students as volunteers in running the project with the younger pupils, and to get the young people involved in publicising the scheme through the design of posters.

By establishing a saving habit early the young people will begin to learn budgeting and planning skills as well as seeing the value of participating as volunteers with their local credit union.



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PIT STOP was established ten years ago in north Halifax as a diversionary scheme to steer young people away from car crime and anti-social behaviour. Today the entirely volunteer-run venture has grown into a major project with approximately 5,000 young people benefiting from its services each year.

The project runs go-karting sessions, which are thoroughly enjoyed by the young people who attend. A small fee of around 50p per head contributes to fuel costs and insurance but beyond that, the project is free to participants. The key to the success of Pit Stop is that they travel to where the young people are located. By going out to the young people, there are no travel costs for participants and a wider catchment area can be covered. The project transports its go-karts by van to tracks set up on playgrounds and open spaces, even airfields, across the region, particularly the most disadvantaged areas.

‘If I wasn’t here, I’d be walking ‘round the streets – probably getting into trouble knowing me!’

Reliable Transportation

To achieve their large number of contacts the group relies on dependable transport. A van enables them to travel out to set up projects all year round. A retired police van donated to the group is now nearing the end of its serviceable life and urgently needed replacing. A grant from the Local Network Fund has enabled Pit Stop 2000 to purchase a new larger van – the most important piece of equipment for the continuation of the project.

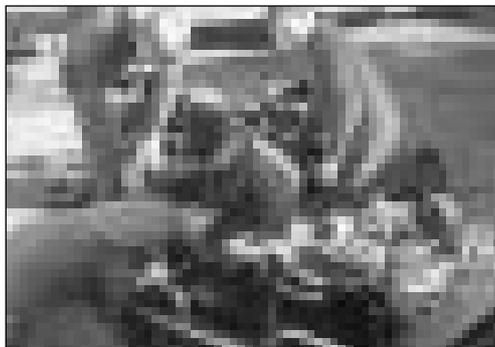
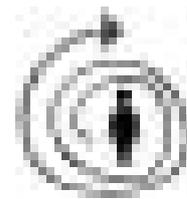
By providing the funds for a new van, the Local Network Fund has enabled the project to keep running and delivering its service to the young people of Halifax and Calderdale.

One of the Pit Stop team said

‘The cost of a new van would take us 12 months of our own fundraising, taking us away from the delivery of the project for local young people.’

As well as the outreach sessions, young people attend workshops two nights a week under adult supervision to work on the go-karts and learn basic maintenance techniques. A group of around thirty young people participate in workshop activities, particularly over the winter months.

Pit Stop 2000



‘If we crash our go-kart, we have to fix it ourselves.’

At the go-kart sessions, a small number of young people have the responsibilities of running the event on site and ensuring the safety of participants and spectators.

The success of the project has led to interest from a wider area and the Pit Stop team now run at least two sessions a week as well as weekends. The grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has ensured that this volunteer run project can focus all its energies into providing a service that is enjoyed by a very large number of local young people.

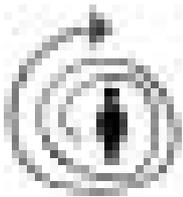


Go-Karting with a track record



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Contacts



Learning Journeys

money I need to provide a safe and stable home for my family and myself.

After-school Clubs

Funding from the Local Network Fund has been used to provide after-school playworkers/drivers who take the bus to venues where there is no other provision for children and young people and where there are no designated play areas. Local Network Fund money has enabled a further two after-school clubs to run for one evening per week each, making five a week in total for the community bus. The Firs estate, a peripheral estate, has little in the way of facilities for young people in an area where 70% of the housing stock is without access to a garden, and is the location for one club. Alum Rock, an inner-city area, provides the second venue.

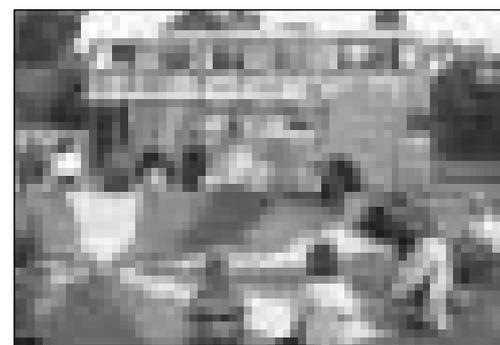
‘I was very lucky I was chosen to go to Pizza Express to celebrate because the Rocky Bus had some money from a Children’s Fund. We had lots of food and I met Jasper Carrot. I had my picture taken and I went on TV. If it wasn’t for the Rocky Bus I would not have such fun. I love the Rocky Bus.’

Haven, aged nine

The structured play sessions, including crafts and sports activity, provide children and young people with a safe environment where they are treated as valuable individuals, where they can make friends, discuss their fears and problems with sympathetic staff who are available even to just listen.

‘This is the only place where I can get some peace.’

Without the clubs funded by the Local Network Fund the children in these two locations would have no after school provision at all.



After-school clubs on the Rock Community Bus

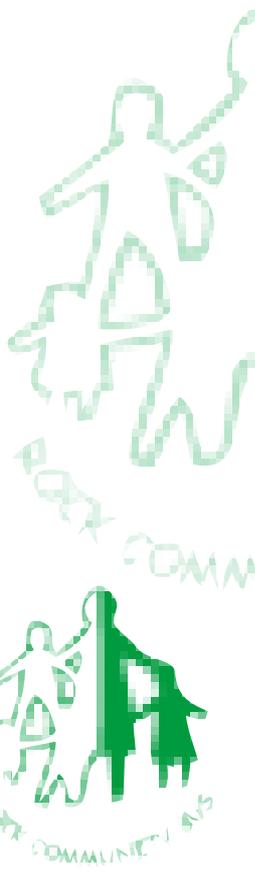
THE ROCK COMMUNITY BUS is a converted double-decker that has a crèche on the upper deck. It is used to support the work of a project providing activities with isolated families on some of Birmingham’s most disadvantaged housing estates and inner city areas. Classes include English for young women who originate from rural areas of Pakistan as well as activities to increase social skills, personal development and self-confidence, parenting, nutrition and cookery, and safe and healthy lifestyles. The Bus is used to look after the young children of parents who attend classes. Whilst the parents study their children are cared for safely on the upper deck and have a chance to socialise with other youngsters and experience pre-school education and play with the qualified crèche workers.

The achievements of this successful project have been recognised by the City of Birmingham who have awarded the Community Bus first place in Community Learning section of their Lifelong Learning Awards.

This follows on from one of the project participants achieving an adult learner’s week award from NIACE, the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education.

As a single parent, Michelle returned to education to make a better life for her family and herself, she undertook a programme of activities on the Rock Community Bus, where she learned skills to improve personal development, self confidence, self esteem and social skills.

‘I am determined to continue my education and become a counsellor of some kind so I can help other people, but also earn the



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UNFORTUNATE EVENTS that result in serious injury in the home are often described as 'accidents' and so can appear unavoidable. Injury at home is however almost always both predictable and preventable. Children aged four and under account for the majority of injuries in the home, but there are significant steps that can be taken to avoid unsafe incidents occurring.

Parents on the Meadow Well estate in North Tyneside began a scheme to improve the safety of their own homes and have in the seven years of the project's operation seen it grow from a purely local initiative to one that now extends to the whole borough.

The Safety Crackers home safety equipment loan scheme now provides and fits tailor made packages of safety equipment to families with children under school age who are on benefit and low income, living in North Tyneside.

Working in Partnership

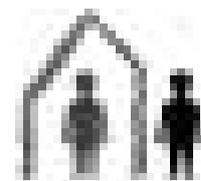
The scheme aims to raise awareness of home safety issues within the community by working with local people, agencies and community groups through participation in open days and other public events.

A wide range of professionals working with statutory agencies refer families, whose accommodation may be in need of some alteration to make it safe. Housing development workers, social workers, health visitors and others all form part of the wide network developed by the project. Each can refer families who are sent a simple application form and put onto a waiting list for the service.

Trained fitters will visit the family home and install relevant safety equipment in consultation with the family. Fitters also provide a full explanation of the equipment that is being installed and ensure that its operation is understood.

A typical package of equipment could include smoke detectors, fireguards, stair gates, carbon monoxide indicators, cable tidies, as well as fridge and window locks, power socket covers and bath thermometers. Whilst this material could cost as much as £70 or £80 to buy a small charge of only £5 per property is made for the loan and fitting, this makes a contribution to the project costs.

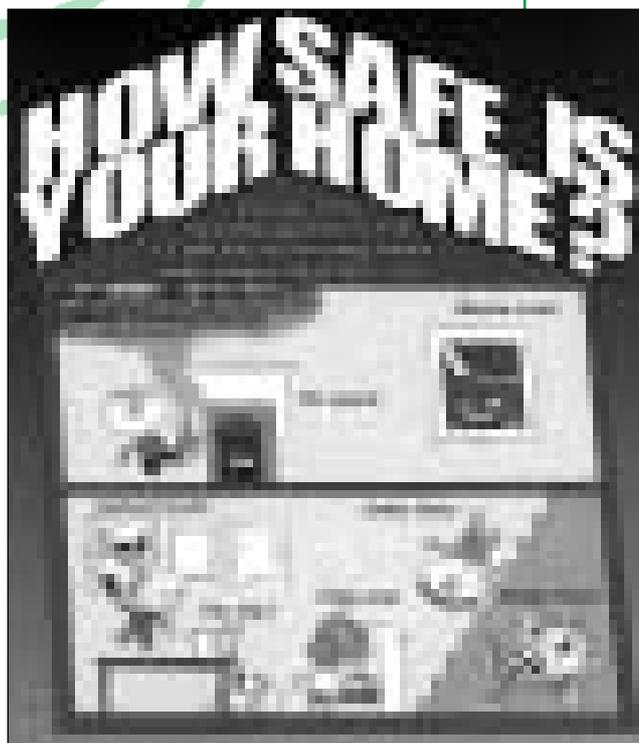
Safety Crackers



‘With very young children, you just have to turn away for a second and they can be on their way upstairs or heading towards the fire. This way, parents don't need to be on tenterhooks all the time.’

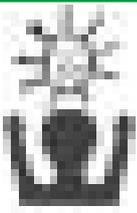
A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has ensured the continued operation of this scheme. It has enabled the project to build closer links with the fire service, local Sure Start agencies and others that share their aims of preventing injury for children in the home.

Ensuring North Tyneside children are safe at home



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Remembering St Ives

Intergenerational reminiscence project

ST IVES IN CORNWALL is the home to an innovative intergenerational reminiscence project. Formed in June 2001 the project is involving young people in interviewing and recording the memories of older people. Alongside the research and production of local publications and exhibitions, it is stimulating young people's interest in local heritage. The project also aims to foster good relations between generations, as well as providing communication skills training and increasing the self-esteem and confidence of the young people involved.

A grant from the Local Network Fund has assisted with the salary costs of a Project Co-ordinator, funding that has enabled other local sources of funding to support the project beyond its initial pilot phase.

Young people are involved in interviewing and recording the reminiscences of the older residents of St Ives. The project workers assess both the young people and the interviewees to ensure a suitable match before arranging meetings which are held either in the project office or in the homes of local elderly people where groups can be interviewed together in their familiar surroundings cared for by their usual carers. Transcripts of interviews are then produced and included in publications. The young people learn the oral history skills of presenting information as it is spoken – without editing or correcting a person's speech for the written publication.

The project has also developed a schools programme and is working with three local schools to record older people's history. One very popular activity is for the children to interview their own grandparents so learning about their specific family history as well as wider community history.

A recent event held in the local council chamber, which connected a group of 36 schoolchildren with 7 older people, was recorded on video. By having access to video, the local history material becomes even more immediate with accents and gestures being recorded as well as the words spoken.

The St Ives Project has completed two publications and further publications are planned dealing with the themes of Education, Jobs and Leisure. Partnership with a local Residents Association has assisted in the wider distribution of these publications as well as the sales through local shops.

Unforeseen Benefits

The reminiscence project was designed and funded as a project to benefit mainly young people and provide an opportunity for them to become engaged with their local community as well as learn some media and communication skills. Whilst it has successfully achieved these outcomes it has also had the added benefit of building a bridge between the generations in St Ives and increasing understanding between older and younger people. With an increasing number of older volunteers eager to become involved and interested in sharing their memories, the project is set to continue and develop for the benefit of both younger and older members of the wider community of St Ives.

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LITTLE HULTON, SALFORD, has one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Western Europe. Like many other areas of Salford, unemployment rates are high, as are recorded drug use and crime rates. In this area, child poverty and poor health is prevalent. It is not surprising that young people suffer from low self-esteem and confidence.

In July 2001, the Brook Advisory Service opened a new young people's sexual health and advice clinic at the Women and Families Centre in Little Hulton. Consultation and outreach work aimed at understanding why sexual health services were not utilised was carried out amongst local young people. This is a particular issue with young men who were typically less likely to access sexual health provision.

Despite the hardships faced in the area a group of local young people quickly became engaged with the issues. They are now involved in running, managing and developing the service and a Young People's Management Group has been established. These 15 young people, all in their early teens, have undertaken a range of training courses and now have a significant input into the running of the service, including participating in interviews for new staff. Members of the group volunteer to help out on a regular basis in the centre.

Several members of the group have trained to become peer educators and peer counsellors, running sessions in the centre and local schools and youth clubs. They have received training in drug awareness, counselling and related issues.

Good Practice Recognised

The centre's good practice in including young people was recognised with the presentation of the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) public involvement award in December 2001. The project was praised for excellence in young people's involvement.

Young People Managing



Spreading the Word

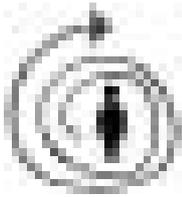
A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has been made to enable the Young People's Management Committee to learn further skills and to spread the word about their involvement and their activities. The group's newsletter will be further developed and distributed locally and a website will enable them to share information more widely.

The members of the management committee who are directly involved in the production of the newsletter and website will receive training and experience in media and computer skills which will be useful to them in future education or employment. The website and newsletter will provide an innovative and effective source of health information to young people throughout Salford and beyond.

Spreading the word about sexual health

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Contacts



Signal Box Community Group

and has developed all of our family's social connections and sense of community. 》

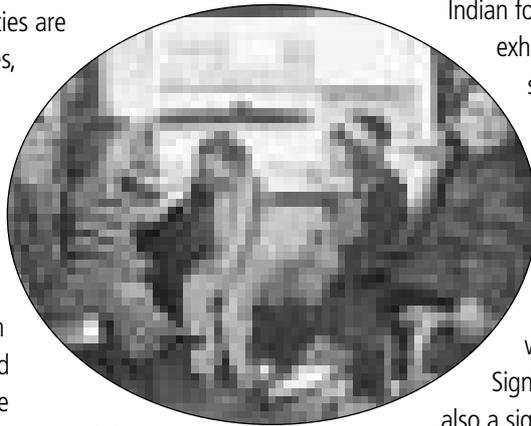
Lisa, a mum

A community space open to all

SIGNAL BOX is a community project in Melton Constable, a village in rural north Norfolk in which, as a result of very limited public transport, many residents find it difficult to access amenities taken for granted elsewhere. As a former railway village (now with no railway), local opportunities are limited and many families, particularly those on a low income, find transport costs prohibitive.

The Signal Box Project aims to provide a community space open to all, where children and young people can involve themselves in creative activities, while parents (some of whom are actively involved in running the project) can meet to socialise and support one another. The group was formed in November 2000 and since February 2001 has had their own premises in the former violin workshop in Melton Constable. A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young people has secured the use of this facility for the local community. Having sole tenancy of their premises means that the group can schedule activities when they need to; messy play can take place with the youngsters; and there is an opportunity to leave art work in progress in a secure space.

‘Signal Box has made the integral difference to my daughter’s adjustment to a new place, providing a space for her to make friends,



The small space is well used, with music workshops on Mondays, workshops for very young children take place on Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons older children and adults meet on Tuesday afternoons. Regular film nights are held on Sunday evening. The Pre-school Learning Alliance have also used the space for guided literacy and numeracy workshops.

Several other one-off events like an Indian food evening and an exhibition on recycling and scrap art have recently taken place, with input from local young people. For a project with limited resources, scrap may be the only art material available to work with, but for the Signal Box Group there is also a significant commitment to using recycled materials.

Environmental Projects

The Signal Box provides local families somewhere to meet and take part in activities, many with an environmental theme. Recently activities have included model making with papier maché, planting seeds and painting pictures which show the different stages of a sunflower’s growth, looking at the rubbish which goes into household bins and studying tadpoles (which were donated by a local well-wisher) and seeing how they become frogs.

‘I want to go to Signalbox. 》

Seamus, aged three

As well as providing a range of activities for young people the group is a valuable networking tool for adults in the village, and serves as an important support group for parents. Through the group, for example, people share out vegetables, which have been grown organically on local allotments. The group is run by the local community for the benefit of the whole community – and is having a positive impact, both for the large number of children who are participating in a wide range of activities and their families.



Contacts

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THANET YOUTH COUNCIL (TYC) is open to all young people between 11 and 20 years old who live, or attend school or college in the Thanet area of Kent. Since its inception in 1998 TYC has provided a forum for local young people to meet together to talk, learn and take action on things that are important to them.

The aim is to ensure that young people are included in the decision-making processes that affect them, and that their voices are heard. Young people work alongside local authority councillors and decision-makers to develop new approaches for young people's engagement with the structures of local democracy. Giving them a sense of pride and belonging to their community is empowering for the young people involved.

TYC also organises events for young people and publishes a regular newsletter three times each year.

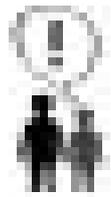
Citizenship Conference

In September 2002, citizenship will become part of the National Curriculum for 11 to 16-year-olds in UK schools. In advance of this, TYC decided to hold a one day conference to examine what the young people themselves understand citizenship to be, and to encourage young people to become more involved with their schools, youth projects and communities.

“OK, so I thought it was just going to be a good excuse to get off school for the day, but I found out I really wanted to learn about what young people are doing – and how I can be one of those young people!”

The Local Network Fund supported the conference, which was well attended with 280 young people present representing eight of the area's eleven schools.

Young and Active Citizens



Workshop Sessions

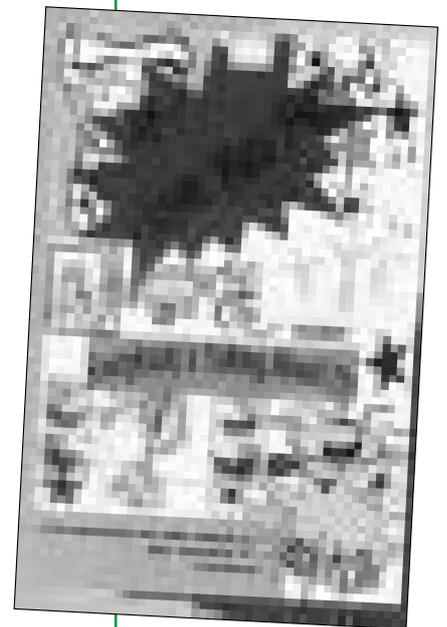
The day was divided into smaller group sessions with each of the participants attending three different workshops over the course of the day. A wide range of issues were covered in the small groups including legal rights, sexual health, bullying, decision making, public speaking, team-working, and campaigning. These workshops were delivered by visiting speakers from local specialist agencies such as the police service and by young people from TYC themselves.

“I learned how to facilitate a workshop and I am more confident when it comes to speaking in public to big crowds.”

Throughout the conference, a number of stalls representing local organisations were on hand to provide the young people with information about their projects. In the afternoon, a London-based group of peer educators called Citizen delivered a series of workshops on active citizenship and equality of opportunity, attended by the participants.

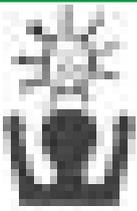
The conference was a big success. An evaluation report which records all of the findings and recommendations from the conference and workshops can now point the way to future engagement of the young people of Thanet with their local communities.

A conference to study citizenship



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Contacts



Weaving the Threads Together

Melodies and memories, telling stories through song

THREADS is a long-term community-based singing project for the children of the Micklehurst estate. Micklehurst is an area of Mossley, on the edge of Greater Manchester. Mossley itself is geographically isolated and Micklehurst even more so, separated as it is by the canal, river and railway tracks from the main amenities of the town. Young people find it difficult to access opportunities for creative expression and cultural activities that others take for granted.

Reminiscence into Song

The Threads project is a development of an earlier Millennium Commission funded event that enabled young people in Mossley to gain training in the skills needed to interview the elder members of the community and present their stories artistically. Multimedia drama, ceramics and mosaics were some of the methods used but perhaps most impressive was the songs that were written and performed by a group of children working with Tyndale Thomas of Urban Voices and the Liverpool Gospel Choir.



Photo: Tameside Advertiser

A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has enabled further development of this work to be carried out in a project sponsored by All Saints Church, Micklehurst, with support from Tameside youth service and community volunteers.

Weekly after-school sessions for participants aged five to fifteen have been the focus for the young people to interview their elders, including members of the small Bangladeshi community, and incorporate their stories into their own songs and compositions. By exploring the history, the struggles and the resilience of their elders, young people have gained a wealth of

material resulting in a repertoire including pop, rap, blues, gospel and choral music. An

audience of 180 was delighted to hear the young people perform at Micklehurst Primary School recently.

Chairperson of Threads Revd Jay MacLeod said:

“We heard stories from ordinary people who have lived extraordinary lives. The children’s songs touched on pain and tragedy, but they lifted us up in hope as well. By the end of the concert, the whole audience was on their feet singing.”

Community Pride

The young people have gained in self-confidence through creating their own songs and performing in front of audiences across Greater Manchester and beyond. The process of researching the oral history of their local community has aided cultural understanding and developed a sense of pride in their local community.

“We’ve heard so many stories of struggle and strength. It makes you proud to live in Micklehurst.”

Emily, aged 10

Contacts

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TYLER HILL IN KENT is a small village with limited local transport where local young people are isolated from the nearest entertainment and social centres. For the last twelve years the Tyler Hill Community Magazine has been published quarterly and distributed free of charge to all houses in the village. Since 1983 the magazine editor and others locally have put some of the surplus income from the magazine into a one week long dinghy sailing course to give local children an experience they would not otherwise enjoy. A recent very small grant from the Local Network Fund has enabled this project to continue.

A scheme operated by the Royal Yacht Association allows the use of a fleet of dinghies for a week in the summer. Approximately twelve children between 8 and 12 years old participate. Experienced volunteer trainers take the young people through every stage of the process from de-mounting dinghies from their trailer, to rigging them and conducting all safety procedures.

Although undertaking a very demanding programme, the young people very quickly learn to handle a small sailing dinghy and within the first couple of days of the course, instructors observe development of determination and resilience in the young people as well as growing confidence and team working skills.

From being timid and fearful when at first getting into the dinghies and being so close to the water, within six hours they were confident enough to be sailing on their own.

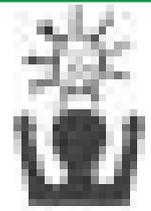
Local teacher and adult helper

On the Thursday of Sailing Week, parents and carers of the young people are invited to the lake to watch their children on the water. The afternoon ends with a barbecue for all and presentations of certificates for completing the training, additionally each child will get a photograph of themselves on the water.

Several previous participants come back as volunteers to help out with the project.

Just over two years ago I came to do the sailing course...I enjoyed it so much that I

Tyler Hill Sailing Week



now belong to Tankerton Sailing Club. This year I came back, but as a helper, it was good.

Ashley

Partnership

A partnership approach has drawn together a diverse group of organisations who all contribute to the success of the venture. Participants include The Royal Engineers Sailing Association; The 'Frostbite' Sailing Association who allow use of their clubhouse; The Kings School in Canterbury who offer use of their safety boat; Zurich Insurance who cover the risks and Brett and Sons haulage company who allow use of their lake for the week.

Through the efforts of an almost entirely voluntary network, groups of young people have had an unforgettable experience, one that will often spark a long-term interest in sailing as a leisure activity.

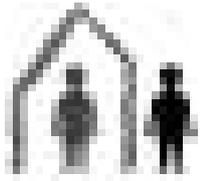


Community magazine provides dinghy sailing course



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Contacts



Unicorns Childminding Playgroup

Childminders sharing resources

FOR MANY FAMILIES with young children, the biggest hurdle to returning to paid work is suitable childcare. Parents need to be confident their young children are well looked after and happy.

Many childminders work in their own homes lacking contact with others. This isolating job can be made harder by the lack of resources for the children. A group of childminders in Nelson Lancashire, along with the headteacher of the Walton Lane Nursery School, set about establishing a network for local childminders to meet each other and provided resources for them to share. An invitation to a meeting in the nursery to determine the local needs was well attended and from this, a core group of childminders has emerged.

The group has established a regular weekly time to meet together in their own space made available by the local nursery. There is an opportunity for the children to play together and use arts and craft materials in an environment more suitable for 'messy play' than at home.

Lending Library

The childminders group has been able, with a grant from the Local Network Fund, to purchase toys and equipment to use at the playgroup meetings and also to establish a lending library containing children's books, toys and equipment that is made available for over 70 childminders to borrow.

As well as toys and games for the children, equipment for the childminders is also available on loan. A double buggy for example is an expensive item to purchase but by loaning it only for the time it is needed expenses are reduced and several childminders will get the use of one piece of equipment.

Learning Together

The childminders have also used their regular sessions to keep their skills up to date. Workshop sessions on issues such as children's sleep and problem mealtimes have been run as well as input from the early-years service on child protection awareness.

The network has become known locally as a source of information about childminding vacancies and through personal contacts at least one mother has been able to quickly find reliable childcare enabling her take up a job offer and return to work.

The Unicorn Childminders have already had a positive impact in their area and are set to expand their provision alongside new building work at the nursery school where they are based.

Shared Benefits

By coming together and working collectively, this group has been able to upgrade their own skills and access services that would not have been made available to them individually. They have a dedicated support worker who is on call from the local authority early-years service. In addition, the children in the care of these childminders will benefit in many ways. They will have access to toys and high quality learning resources that they would not otherwise have available to them and they will have more opportunities to socialise with children of a similar age, thus improving their social skills.

Contacts

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Unicorns Childminding Playgroup
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Lancashire BB9 0TH

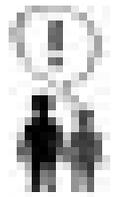
YOUNG PEOPLE who are underachieving in their education and disaffected with school may face multiple barriers to learning. For a significant minority of school students, being bullied or threatened with bullying is one barrier that can be removed, with appropriate intervention. One important way of tackling bullying is through peer-led exploration of the issues involved and this approach has been implemented in Middlesbrough and Hartlepool secondary schools by the community mediation organisation UNITE.

Since its establishment in 1993 as a pilot mediation scheme operating on three estates in Middlesbrough, UNITE has grown to become one of the largest independent mediation services in the UK. In addition to offering community mediation, which encompasses neighbour disputes, workplace disputes, landlord/tenant disputes and school-based disputes, UNITE also offers a range of conciliation and training services.

'Sob Story' is a peer-led consultation drama and visual arts project. It has been funded by the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People. An experienced theatre facilitator from UNITE has been working with the peer mentor groups in two local secondary schools. They have devised a piece of theatre and accompanying creative workshop to examine bullying and the effect it has on both the victim and the bully.

The workshop design ensures that participants are able to explore the issues raised by the performance using a variety of creative media including role-play, creative writing and visual arts.

Sob Story



Performance at Primary Schools

The performance and workshops were initially presented to younger students at the participating secondary schools and the intention is to tour the performance to all the local feeder primary schools.

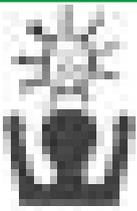
The primary school children who make up the audience for the performance will have the opportunity to explore a highly sensitive issue in a safe creative environment. This will also give them the chance to meet and relate to the older pupils who will become part of their support network once they begin their new secondary school.

Overall 830 young people will benefit from the project which, it is hoped, will help to tackle the damage done by bullying.

Telling tales to stop bullying at school

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Contacts



Outdoor Activities Club

Raising expectations and building self-confidence



SINCE 1999 the Wellfield project in Bolton has been offering young people aged 25 and under a wide range of activities that enable them to explore life choices in a safe environment. The project presents both the space and opportunity to make informed choices, as well as offering an alternative to involvement in petty crime and vandalism. The aim is to develop self-confidence, and to engage young people who are excluded or at risk of exclusion from school. The Wellfield project also enables some young people to achieve qualifications in an informal setting.

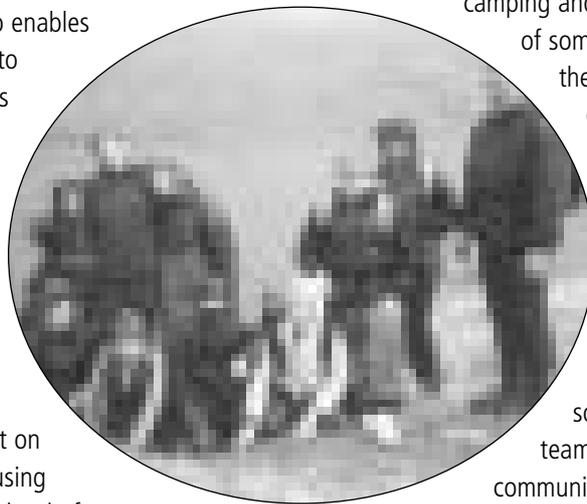
Local young people and residents set up the project on the Willows estate in Bolton. This is a positive development on a disadvantaged housing estate, where a high level of unemployment means many families are claiming housing benefit. In addition, recorded youth crime is amongst the highest across the borough. The Wellfield project aims to offer young people experiences to raise their expectations and offer alternatives that will help young people find ways to break the cycle of unemployment and minor offending.

The project operates from a former semi-detached house on the estate, which was

offered by the local housing department. Local residents and young people helped convert the property into a drop-in centre for under 25 year-olds.

The project has developed from this base and now operates several other projects including after-school study support and lunchtime Year 6 clubs in the local primary schools. A project with young mums offers training in running small organisations and team building skills, developing the employment prospects of the participants.

A successful application for funding from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has set up an extension to the project. The Wellfield group is now developing a range of outdoor education activities including



camping and canoeing as a result of some successful sessions the young people at the club had enjoyed. The project, which will be run by young people themselves and supported by adults, will help them develop practical skills and social skills such as team working and communication.

A Visit to Easterhouse

To develop the project and their ability to run it the young people from Bolton are planning to visit the Easterhouse estate in Glasgow where a similar organisation is based. They hope to draw on the knowledge of an existing project but also share their own ideas and experiences. This 'fact finding' visit has also been funded by the Local Network Fund grant.

By providing experiential learning activities for young people at risk of social and educational exclusion, the project has enabled young people to make informed life choices and put together a personal development plan which may involve a return to formal education or training.

Contacts

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 Willows Estate
 Deane
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FOR SOME CHILDREN and young people bullying at school forms a major part of their daily routine, overshadowing their educational career.

Studies vary in their estimates of the extent of bullying but a figure of between 20–25% of children in school involved in bullying is not unrealistic – this is backed up by surveys carried out in schools in Wolverhampton in 1991 and 1993.

It is known that the effects of bullying can be long standing and severe – in extreme cases leading to self-harm or even suicide attempts, as well as emotional and psychological effects such as low self-esteem and lack of self-confidence.

A campaign aimed at stamping out bullying in Wolverhampton's schools was initiated by a local mother in 1991. The project, which urges students to work as a team to bring about positive approaches to combat the bullies, supports victims of bullying and their families through education, liaison with the schools and provision of information.

Interactive CD-ROMs on Coping with Bullying have been made available to every primary and secondary school in the borough. In addition, posters have been produced and an information pack including a pocket-sized laminated card has been given to all children who are moving from primary to secondary schools. The card contains helpline numbers and information aimed at helping anyone who is worried about bullying.

Visiting Local Schools

The project also visits schools across Wolverhampton to lead workshop sessions addressing the issues of bullying and undertake follow-up visits to the most vulnerable who need further support.

Her coming in helped us think about what happens to children being bullied and scared to even tell their own families or friends. It makes us put ourselves in their shoes and think how scared we would be.

Anti Bullying Project



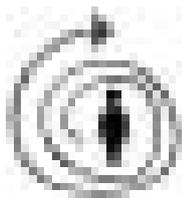
A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has ensured the continuation and extension of the important work of this project. The project will now be able to visit more schools, help more pupils, in doing so will enable the children and young people to get on with their education without the fear of being bullied.

Wolverhampton support information and advice scheme



Fay Bayton, Chairperson
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t: 01902 658 168
Freephone: 0800 616798

Contacts



An Easy Place to Be

Information,
support and
counselling for
young people

THE XTRAX YOUNG PEOPLE'S CENTRE provides 16 to 25 year olds in the Hastings and Rother areas of east Sussex a safe place to meet where they will be respected and valued. Amongst the project's target group are those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, drug and alcohol misuse. It operates as a drop-in centre and offers support services, food, clothes, showers and washing machines as well as providing social activities and educational events.

Regular games nights are organised, pool tables and video games plus satellite TV and computer equipment are available for centre users to enjoy. The food and snack bar offers very cheap meals and drinks.

The Xtrax project offers help and advice to young people, or refers them to other local agencies. The project is staffed by both paid staff and volunteers who can deal with issues relating to, housing; drugs and substance misuse; pregnancy;



employment; benefits and welfare advice and sexual health. Young people are also invited to address any other issues that they need assistance with; these will be dealt with in confidence.

The project aims to assist young people to develop relationship skills, personal awareness and provide training or education opportunities. The project works with the centre users to implement educational programmes to match their self-identified needs. One example of a project developed and operating at the Xtrax Centre is the 'Offspring!' project for young parents.

Sharing Experiences

At their regular weekly meetings the group provide an opportunity for parents to come together meet other parents and... 'share ideas, disasters and experiences'. Project staff look after the children whilst young parents can attend courses in areas such as child first aid and basic cooking skills.

'The Get Cooking course is great, it makes a change – no kids! (Even though us adults can act more like kids than the kids do!) A real break from the norm.'

Young parents can learn about children's health and development, child care, returning to work or education whilst their children have a safe place to play and explore with other young children.

'They have a big toy castle that's my favourite.'
Masie, aged 4

'My Mum's happy here.'
Nelson, aged 4

Xtrax, by working with the project users themselves, is developing a range of events and activities that assist young people's self development and maturity as individuals and members of society enabling them to improve their own conditions of life.



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SHEFFIELD IS HOME to about 5,000 people of Yemeni descent, many of them recent arrivals from refugee families. There is however a long history of a Yemeni community in the area with a supplementary school having been established and run as a community self-help project in some form for over 40 years.

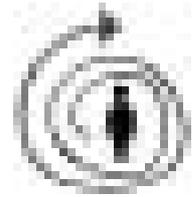
The Yemeni Community Association run the supplementary school to teach local youngsters about their cultural heritage as well as offering classes in the Arabic language. Arabic is also used as the language for lessons in Maths, History and Science that follow the National Curriculum. The focus is on raising the educational achievements of the young people and lifting their confidence.

Developing the skills of bilingual members of the Yemeni community through language training results in a pool of translators and interpreters who can be called on to assist the community. Future employment opportunities may also be enhanced for the young people.

Waiting List

A grant from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People has enabled the supplementary school to rent local primary school premises at the weekend where 10 experienced tutors volunteer to deliver the classes. At present, the supplementary school has a total of 125 children and young people aged between 7 and 18 on the roll, with a waiting list for others hoping to join.

Sheffield Saturday School



Learning through Drama

As well as academic and language work, the young people also have the opportunity to try out other creative activities. A recent series of drama workshops conducted at the supplementary school has resulted in the young people developing and performing their own play. The play entitled 'Palestine' allowed the young people, several of them refugees, to explore and express their own experiences via drama. The young people performed the play to an audience of 400 including Sheffield's Lord Mayor, Councillor David Baker, international boxing hero Naseem Hamed, and a representative from the Yemeni Embassy in London, as well as parents and young people from the local area.

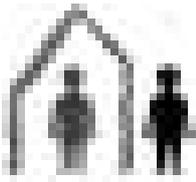
Abdul Shaif, Chair of the Yemeni Community Association, said that the young people had really demonstrated their creativity:

“The young people involved have done a fantastic job – they have made music, learned to act, and really helped to improve understanding through their creative approach, which is second to none.”

Yemeni community supplementary school

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Contacts



Peer Support Group

Support for homeless or recently housed young people

CENTRE 63, as its name suggests, was set up in 1963 as the Church of England in Kirkby's response to the Government commissioned Albermarle Report on young people. A new building was constructed to meet the needs of the town with the highest proportion of young people in Europe. In its 40 years of operation the centre has seen many changes and is still going strong today, it is known for the projects operating within the Centre such as the Youth Club, the Response Project and the Youth Enquiry Service (YES).

The YES project established in 1992 offers advice and information service to the young people of Kirkby. Initially established because young people were not accessing the existing information and advice services, YES is a needs-led service responding to the demands of its service users, it currently offers informal counselling, sexual health, housing and domestic violence advice. YES has a lot of referrals from other local agencies but young people also learn of the support on offer through word of mouth.

Housing

Housing for young people in Kirkby has long been a difficult issue, frequently mentioned by Centre 63 service users. Young people have found it hard to find any housing at all and that which has been on offer is hard-to-let property in the most unpopular areas. As a result of this situation, a successful application to the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People



was made to develop a peer support programme for the young people of Kirkby to assist with housing issues.

The project is aimed at young people between 16 and 19 who have recently secured or are waiting to secure accommodation.

Weekly Sessions

The 12 weekly sessions cover a wide range of issues relating to young people setting up home for the first time and include neighbour nuisance, understanding tenancies and sexual health awareness. Other sessions include benefits, training and employment support. Other sessions have been made available for the young people to raise their own concerns, which may be met by invited speakers from local agencies.

‘The programme has given me the confidence to communicate with agencies and staff more effectively.’

Michelle

It is an important part of the programme that the young people should use the opportunity to build and refine their own support networks so team-building events have been introduced into the programme. The aim is to ensure the course participants operate as a unit and support each other beyond the limits of the course.

Between six and twelve young people are involved in each programme and those nearing completion of the first course have agreed to assist in the evaluation of the programme and help with planning the next. They are also working as volunteers with the participants on subsequent courses.

Contacts

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Old Hall Lane
Kirkby
Merseyside L32 5TH
t: 0151 549 1494

Your group could be eligible for funding from the government...



Photo: Tameside Advertiser

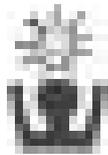


How to apply

Your group could be eligible for funding from the government...

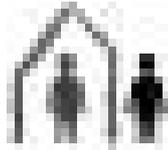
GIVING LOCAL PEOPLE THE CHANCE to make a difference to the lives of children and young people, The Local Network Fund for Children and Young People enables groups to meet the needs of children and young people aged 0–19 through funding, advice and support. Grants range between £250 and £7,000.

The Local Network Fund for Children and Young People supports projects that meet one of its four themes.



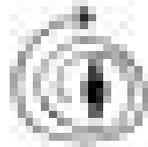
Aspirations and Experiences

Some children miss out on childhood experiences that others take for granted. Groups can organise activities and help children and young people achieve goals they would otherwise be unable to achieve.



Economic Disadvantage

Schemes that help families improve their living standards and cope with difficulties that come from being on a low income.



Isolation and Access

Support and opportunities for young people who may feel isolated or alone; or have difficulty accessing services that are available to other young people.



Children's Voices

Giving children and young people the chance to give their own opinions about and advice on the matters that concern them

There is a phased roll-out of funds (see map opposite); if you think you may be eligible for a Local Network Fund for Children and Young People grant please telephone the **National Call Centre on 0845 113 0161**.



National
Call Centre
0845 113 0161



The Local Network Fund for Children and Young People is a government initiative managed by the Children and Young People's Unit and administered by Community Foundation Network. For more details on the unit or the fund log on to www.cypu.gov.uk

Local Network Fund for Children and Young People

Local Administrators

