

Youth Voice

Annual Report



2010 – 2011



Your Homes
Newcastle



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Youth Voice

The Team

- Karen Adamson – Operational Manager
- Jenna Mitchelmore – (Maternity Leave) Peer Education Coordinator
- Wendy Wallace – Peer Education Coordinator
- Herbie Cooper – Volunteer Coordinator
- Jade Cairns – Youth Voice Assistant
- Lee Luke – Youth Voice Assistant

What do we do?

Youth Voice is for young people aged 16 – 25 living in Newcastle upon Tyne who have experienced homelessness or housing issues.

It's a chance for young people to have their say about things that matter to them, learn new skills, meet new people and have fun!

There are lots of opportunities to get involved:

- **Peer Education** – young people felt that they would have benefited from more available information in schools about services and support that is available to young people. From this, programmes have been developed to meet this need and are delivered as part of PHSE in secondary schools and Pupil Referral Units.
- **Youth Independence Forum** – this was set up and is facilitated by young people who are supported by accommodation services in Newcastle. The aim of the forum is to create an opportunity where young people can speak to decision makers in the city to ensure that their voices are heard and they can make a difference. This meeting is held monthly.
- **Code of Conduct** – young people felt that the services they accessed affected how they were treated by that service. They developed a quality framework for services that support young people who have a housing need, and, annually, they inspect these services and support them to improve on areas which are important to young people.
- **Drop in sessions** - a weekly opportunity to meet up with other young people, chat, eat and have some fun!
- **Volunteering** - all young people who work with Youth Voice have the opportunity to be registered as volunteers.
- **Positive activities** – we support young people to plan activities that they would like to take part in.
- **Interviewing and inducting new staff** – due to the experiences of the young people we support, they are part of a group of young people who make up an interview panel and take part in the interviewing and inducting of new staff in Children's Services. They are also part of the interview panel for the Young People's Service.

- **Workshops and events** - we are often asked to present our work to other services and attend events to discuss what we do.
- **Campaigning for change** – young people use the systems and services we work in, so they are experts in these experiences. Because of this they are able to identify improvements and we support them to do this.
- **Awards and celebrations** – young people can gain accreditation for the work they do with Youth Voice from the Youth Achievement Awards. We support the celebration of all young people's achievements and have responsibility for arranging annual events for all of the young people who are supported by the Young People's Service.

How do we do it?

We use a variety of methods to engage the young people, including forums, drop ins, group work, fun activities and one to one sessions. We used tried and tested models of participation.

Who do we work with?

We work with a range of services across the city to improve outcomes for young people. These include both the statutory and voluntary sector and include: Barnardo's, Foyer, De Paul, Youth Services and Newcastle City Council.

The referral criteria

- Just their age!

We expect support from their workers to engage them in our work, and they can take part in any of it or all of it, the choice is theirs.

Each week we have available a list of what's on and just need to be informed by a worker that the young person is attending or is keen to attend.

We can also arrange a one to one session with a young person prior to attending if it is felt they would benefit from this.

How do we measure outcomes?

We focus on soft skill development - confidence, self esteem, time keeping etc. From observing this we can determine the development of young people. We also contribute to support plans and the 'Outcome Star'.

Monitoring

- Evaluate every session we hold with young people,
- Sessions are planned and are outcome focused, using the Every Child Matters framework.
- Collect statistical information as well as qualitative data.

Volunteering

As well as young people as volunteers, the Young People's Service recruits volunteers who are members of the public, tenants of YHN or members of staff from other departments. These volunteers offer their time to the Young People's Service to help support the work we do, helping young people develop the skills for independent living.

Community volunteers are members of the public, including tenants of YHN. Corporate volunteers are employees of YHN who offer up to 4 hours a week to the Young People's Service. We also have volunteer counsellors, who are either qualified or in training who help young people feel better about themselves and solve their problems in a private and safe environment.

This year we have recruited 12 new volunteers, and they attended a 2 day training session with Youth Voice. The sessions included positive listening skills, drug and alcohol awareness, the practicalities of being a volunteer and discussions with members of Youth Voice and a current volunteer. All volunteers have the opportunity to complete an NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Volunteering with our support. Current and previous volunteers who have completed their NCFE Level 2 were awarded their Certificate at our 'All Stars Ceremony' in February.

Corporate Volunteers:

New Volunteers February 2011: **2**

Active Corporate Volunteers 2010-11: **6**

Past and Present Corporate Volunteers who have completed their NCFE award: **4**

Corporate
Volunteer
Hours:

264

Community
Volunteer
Hours:

413

Community Volunteers:

New Volunteers February 2011: **7**

Active Community Volunteers 2010-11: **14** (6 YHN tenants)

Past and Present Community Volunteers who have completed their NCFE award: **4**

Counselling Volunteers:

New Volunteers 2011: **4**

Active Counselling Volunteers: **6** (1 Corporate, 5 Community)

Young People supported by the counselling service 2010: **17**

Young People waiting to access the counselling service: **9**

Counselling
Volunteer
Hours:

218

Areas of the Young People's Service that have benefited from Community and Corporate volunteers:

- ★ Family Intervention Project
- ★ Floating Support
- ★ Hostel
- ★ Positive Activities for Young People
- ★ Supported Accommodation
- ★ Youth Voice

Young Volunteers

New Youth Voice Members 2010-2011: **28**

Active Youth Voice Volunteers 2010-2011: **27**

Volunteers working towards Youth Achievement Awards: **11**

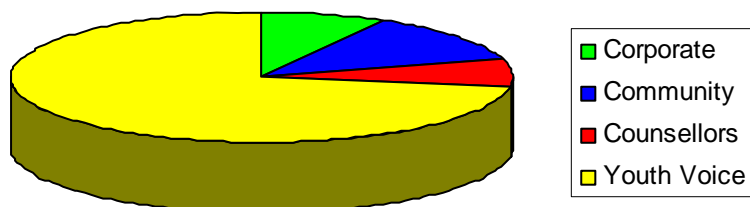
Youth Voice
Volunteer
Hours:

2409

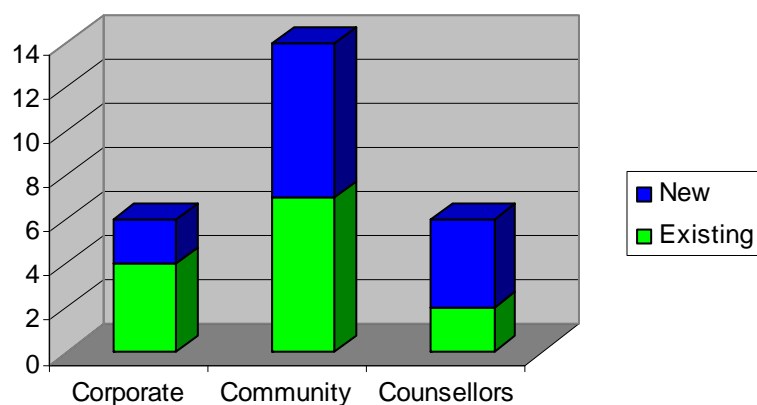
Projects Youth Voice volunteers have given their time to:

- ★ Board representative sessions
- ★ Code of Conduct
- ★ Customer involvement sessions
- ★ Developing new peer education sessions for use in primary schools and reviewing our current sessions.
- ★ European exchange planning
- ★ National Youth Reference Group
- ★ Peer education in schools – homeless prevention
- ★ Peer education in schools – teenage pregnancy
- ★ Positive Activities for Young People
- ★ Presentations to Newcastle Safeguarding Children's Board
- ★ Presentations to the Children's Trust
- ★ Staff interviews
- ★ What Matters to Us – Newcastle's plan for Children and Young People
- ★ Youth Independence Forum
- ★ Youth Voice drop-in

**Volunteer hours by group
2010-2011**



Volunteer numbers 2011



Youth Independence Forum

What is the YIF about?

The Youth Independence Forum (YIF) is a monthly meeting in Newcastle city centre for Young People (aged 16-25) who have experienced homelessness or housing issues. The aim is to get their voices heard by service providers and decision makers, so their opinions can help improve services for young people in our city



Our terms of reference

The forum exists to:

- Create opportunities for young people to have a say on what is being done for young homeless people;
- It gives a voice to the young homeless, young people living independently and those who are in the care system;
- When decisions are being made that affect youth homelessness, housing and support we can let young people know, ask what they think, then tell the people who make the decisions;
- We can discuss issues affecting young people and investigate ways to support young people with these issues;
- Help staff and young people learn from each other;
- Remove barriers to young people getting involved and build confidence;
- Raise profile with service providers and decision makers.

How it's run

Meetings are held every 1st Thursday of the month (excluding January & August) at Brunswick Methodist Church in Newcastle city centre. Starting at 1.30pm, but open at 1.15pm for refreshments and a welcoming chat. Meetings are run bi-monthly for workers and services to attend, whilst every meeting is for young people to attend. The young people only meetings are used as an opportunity for the young people to build on their skill base or simply have fun together as a team.

Organisations represented at the YIF

- ★ Barnardo's
- ★ De Paul UK
- ★ Newcastle City Council –
 - Adult and Culture Services
 - Children's Trust Board
 - Homelessness
 - Housing
- ★ Norcare
- ★ Stonham Tyneside Foyer
- ★ Tyneside Cyrenians
- ★ YHN - Youth Voice



2010 Action Plan – what we have done

What YIF members feel we've achieved:

- ★ Worked as a team.
- ★ Partnership working with others.
- ★ Provided information to members on support services available to them.
- ★ Raising the issues faced by young people and building awareness of youth homelessness.
- ★ Point of contact and reference for young people and services.
- ★ Supporting young people to get their opinions, experiences and voices heard.
- ★ Helped build young people's confidence in their abilities and talent.
- ★ Kept attendance running and promoted to services throughout Newcastle.

YIF members believe we have achieved this through:

- Delivering Homeless Prevention Peer-education and Teenage Parent Peer-education in secondary schools across Newcastle to provide younger people with the information they may need to know, to make informed choices of their own, and aim to reduce homelessness and unwanted pregnancies.
- Assessing homelessness and housing services through the code of conduct process, ensuring all services are treating young people with the respect and dignity they deserve.
- Started designing a website to promote the YIF and provide information to young people about homelessness.
- Arranged a European exchange with Sweden.

Projects we've worked with

- Centre Point
- Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership
- Children's Plan, Newcastle City Council
- Children's Trust Board
- Community Action on Health
- National Youth Reference Group
- Regional Youth Homeless Network
- Young People's Homeless Review Group
- Youth Linx

Guest Speakers and Facilitators

- Crisis Skylight
- D 'n' A
- E2E
- Future Jobs Fund
- Gibber
- ITV Fixers
- Job Centre Plus
- Newcastle City Council
- Newcastle Futures
- Positive Futures
- Street League
- Tomorrow's People

2011-2012 YIF Action Plan

<p>Peer Education – ensuring young people in Newcastle have access to information and support in school</p>	<p>Continue with 2 year programme (agreed 2010). Look to develop links with IYS clusters to deliver preventative 1:1 peer education work with young people displaying trigger behaviours.</p>
<p>European Exchange – promote European Citizenship and personal development opportunities</p>	<p>Develop European Exchange plan with Swedish partner. Full year of activities, training and planning to be delivered through the YIF.</p>
<p>Promote to other young people in the city</p>	<p>Develop recruitment plan Work with ITV Fixers to create a website which will be accessible to all young people and promote the work of the YIF</p>
<p>Recognition of the YIF and contribution to the city’s strategic outcomes</p>	<p>YIF to manage the action plan</p>
<p>Continue with delivering the Code of Conduct – ensuring a high and consistent quality of accommodation and service provision across the city and with a variety of providers.</p>	<p>Book in annual inspection with services at YHN, De Paul, Stonham, Norcare, Cyrenians and continue to develop work with Gateshead Council. Agree actions on recommendations with Adult and Culture Services Prevention Commissioner</p>
<p>Develop greater transparency at the Housing Advice Centre (HAC) and keep young people informed about the allocations procedures and progress made on their case.</p>	<p>Reassess HAC toolkit and develop Code of Conduct criteria specific to the service that HAC provide. Bi-monthly liaison with HAC representative at YIF. Develop methods to better capture young people’s experience</p>
<p>Opportunities for employment and training and the associated costs of coming off benefits. Need to support to manage transition into employment and full rent costs and provide information about changes in the benefit system.</p>	<p>Continue work around the employment compact and present clear information to young people on changes involved in the single benefit and top up schemes. Request support from relevant agencies to answer specific queries or issues from young people.</p>
<p>Accountable agencies attending the YIF, developing partnerships and improving communication - ensure a consistent offer to young people; meeting the needs of the individual.</p>	<p>YIF members identify accountable agencies they would like to invite and ensure YIF has reliable process to identify and respond to young people’s concerns.</p>

YIF Highlights!

European exchange

Staff have supported young people on a funding application so that representatives from YIF can visit another European country. The aim of the exchange is to compare and gain a better understanding of youth issues, youth homeless, and service provision.

Eight young people from the YIF are working together to organise a European exchange with Helsingborg's Navigatorcentrum, a youth group in Sweden. The aims of the exchange programme are to promote European citizenship and social integration of young people as well as comparing services and gaining a better understanding of youth issues and youth homelessness.

The YIF group will be hosting the Swedish young people for a week in June and will share their experiences, show them around Newcastle and Northumberland, and work together on workshops to build skills, aspirations and confidence. In August, the group will go to Sweden for the return visit of the exchange, and the young people from Helsingborg will show us around their services and local area.

We are so excited to go and just know that this could be a once in a lifetime opportunity, so we need to do everything we possibly can to have fun and socially include everyone.” – Exchange group member

Children's Trust Board presentation January 2011

Young people represented the YIF at the Children's Trust Board meeting in January 2011.

They gave a presentation to the Board (made up of decision-makers from a range of children/young people's services) which explained what the young people from the YIF have achieved over the last year, and what members of the YIF see as priority action points for young people who are homeless or potentially at risk of homelessness in Newcastle.

This presentation also highlighted the YIF's plan for 2011 and helped develop the relationship between YIF and the Board members. The young people were able to ask for help with specific parts of the YIF action plan and through this have developed partnerships with new agencies in the city to promote young people's participation and help address many of the issues around youth homelessness. These new partner agencies include: The Youth Offending Team, Newcastle College and St Michael's Primary school.

Peer Education

Peer education is a key part of Youth Voice's work. We believe that young people are often more receptive to information given by other young people than that given by more formal approaches by adults. Youth Voice trains their own volunteer peer educators to provide peer education on a variety of issues directly related to young people. As a Youth Voice Peer Educator, young people have the chance to take part in a wide range of opportunities:

- ★ Training and support
- ★ Build confidence and esteem
- ★ Achievements and certificates
- ★ Learn new skills such as media, presenting and group work
- ★ Develop and deliver activities for sessions
- ★ Team building and working as a group
- ★ Have fun and meet new people

There are currently two peer education programmes, Homeless Prevention (HPPE) and Teenage Parent (TPPE) which are delivered in schools across the city. Our programmes work towards the both national and local strategic targets to reduce homelessness and also unwanted teenage pregnancies.

Homeless Prevention Peer Education

After sharing their experiences of homelessness, young people felt it would be good to raise the awareness of the issues and aim to prevent other young people from going through some of the experiences they had to face at such a young age.

In 2010 - 2011, **9 more young people have been trained as Homeless Prevention Peer Educators** for the HPPE and volunteered their time to deliver sessions in schools. Young people can be trained at any time to be peer educators and Youth Voice regularly advertises across the service and through the Youth Independence Forum for new volunteers.

A brand new DVD was produced in 2010 by Youth Voice and Digital Voice Media providing essential information on homelessness support and services available to young people in Newcastle, such as where to go for help, procedures and support if they ever became homeless or in need of housing help, what to expect in housing offices, what procedures/forms need to be followed and what housing options are available to them.

Our new DVD was written by, starred and presented by our young volunteers involved in Youth Voice. The DVD managed to capture a snap shot of real life stories and issues faced by homeless young people in our city. A launch event in November invited service providers from a wide range of sectors both statutory and voluntary including Health, Social Services, Education and Housing. The launch was held at Newcastle Civic Centre and the positive response to the DVD has enabled us to link into more services, in particular secondary schools, meaning the level of young people in the city we are reaching has increased dramatically.

Youth Voice would like to take this opportunity to thank all those service providers and professionals who have taking the time to attend the launch and those who have worked with us to ensure that the homeless prevention programme reaches its target group.

We show this DVD in secondary schools, specialist schools including the Pupil Referral Unit either in **PSHE lessons or assemblies**, and have discussions with the students about who is around to help and what real experiences were like. We also make young people aware of what the likely reality is of getting housed in Newcastle, including the waiting lists and lack of choice in where you may be housed. **The Youth Guide** is a resource which accompanies the programme. The guide, which is full of useful information and advice on housing and homelessness is shown and left in schools and with groups at each session. The idea is that the information can be accessed by teachers and young people when it is relevant, and they will have details of where to go for support if they need it.

In 2010/11 we have delivered the following sessions to Year 7 and Year 11 students in schools and to young people in youth groups:

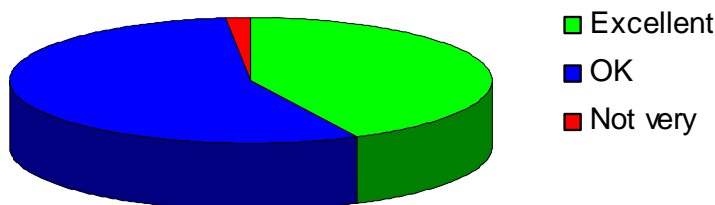
HPPE delivered to **593 students** – (311 female 291 male)

- Ashlyn's Unit
- Linhope Pupil Referral Unit
- Walker Technology College
- Excelsior Academy
- All Saints College
- Heaton Manor
- Benfield Sports collage

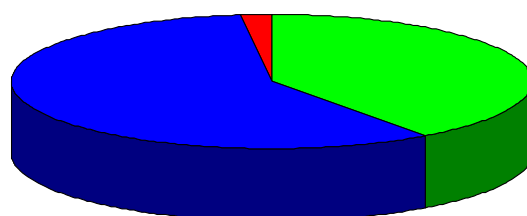
*"We don't tell people how to live their lives; we give them **the facts** so that they can make safer choices" – Peer Educator*

All students are asked to provide completed **evaluation forms** so we can assess the information we delivered, how it was delivered and how we could improve the session.

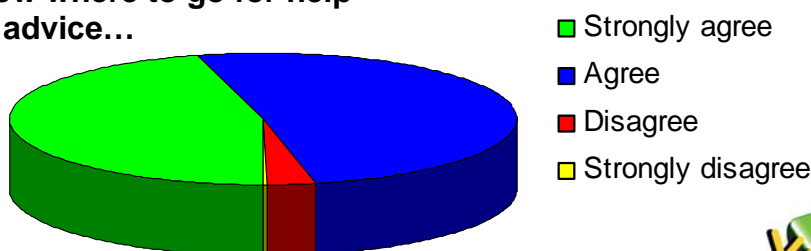
The session was...



I learnt new things about homelessness...



I know where to go for help and advice...



Teenage Parent Peer Education

Young parents who accessed support from the Young People's Service and attended our Bumps and Babies group developed a peer-education programme to share with other young people what being a teenage parent is really like, provide information on the contraceptive and pregnancy options available, what it is like to be pregnant, housing difficulties and budgeting. The young people felt there is a lack of information given in schools about the sexual health and relationship issues that really concern and matter to young people and this prevented them from making informed decisions about their future.

This year, **8 young people** have been trained as teenage parent peer educators and have volunteered their time to deliver the sessions in schools. Young people can be trained at any time to be peer educators and Youth Voice regularly advertises across the service and through the Youth Independence Forum for new volunteers. The programme runs for 6 one hour sessions usually delivered over a 6 week period.

The information programme covers the following:

- ★ Relationships
- ★ Sex, relationships and love (the differences)
- ★ Contraception
- ★ Sexual health
- ★ Substance misuse, sex and the implications
- ★ Pregnancy - the options
- ★ Pregnancy - the nine months
- ★ Birth, the baby and housing options
- ★ Life after the birth (own experiences)
- ★ Practical session (experience of caring for a baby, using the
- ★ Electronic babies and the pregnancy bump)

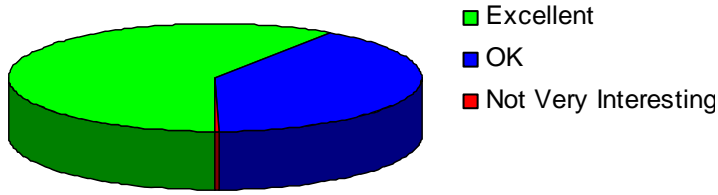
In 2010 a training pack has been developed for students. This resource is given out to those who want it after the programme has been delivered, so they have evidence of their participation in the programme to go towards educational portfolios etc.

In 2010/11 our TPPE has reached a number of schools and services (hitting all of the secondary schools in the Teenage Pregnancy 'hotspot areas') in the last year we have delivered the programme for students at:

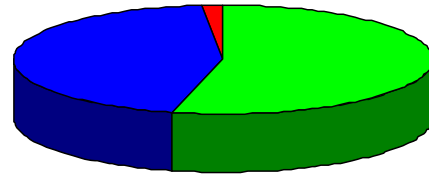
- ★ Walker Technology College; Years 8, 9 & 10
- ★ Excelsior Academy; Years 9 & 10
- ★ All Saints College; Years 10 & 11
- ★ Benfield School; Year 10
- ★ Newcastle Bridges School; Years 10, 11 & 12
- ★ Gosforth High School; Year 10
- ★ Hassockfield Secure Training Unit (13-17 years old)

Evaluation of the sessions from the students;

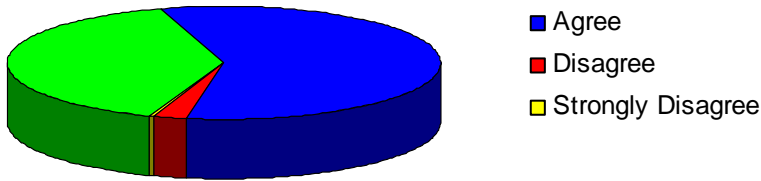
The session was...



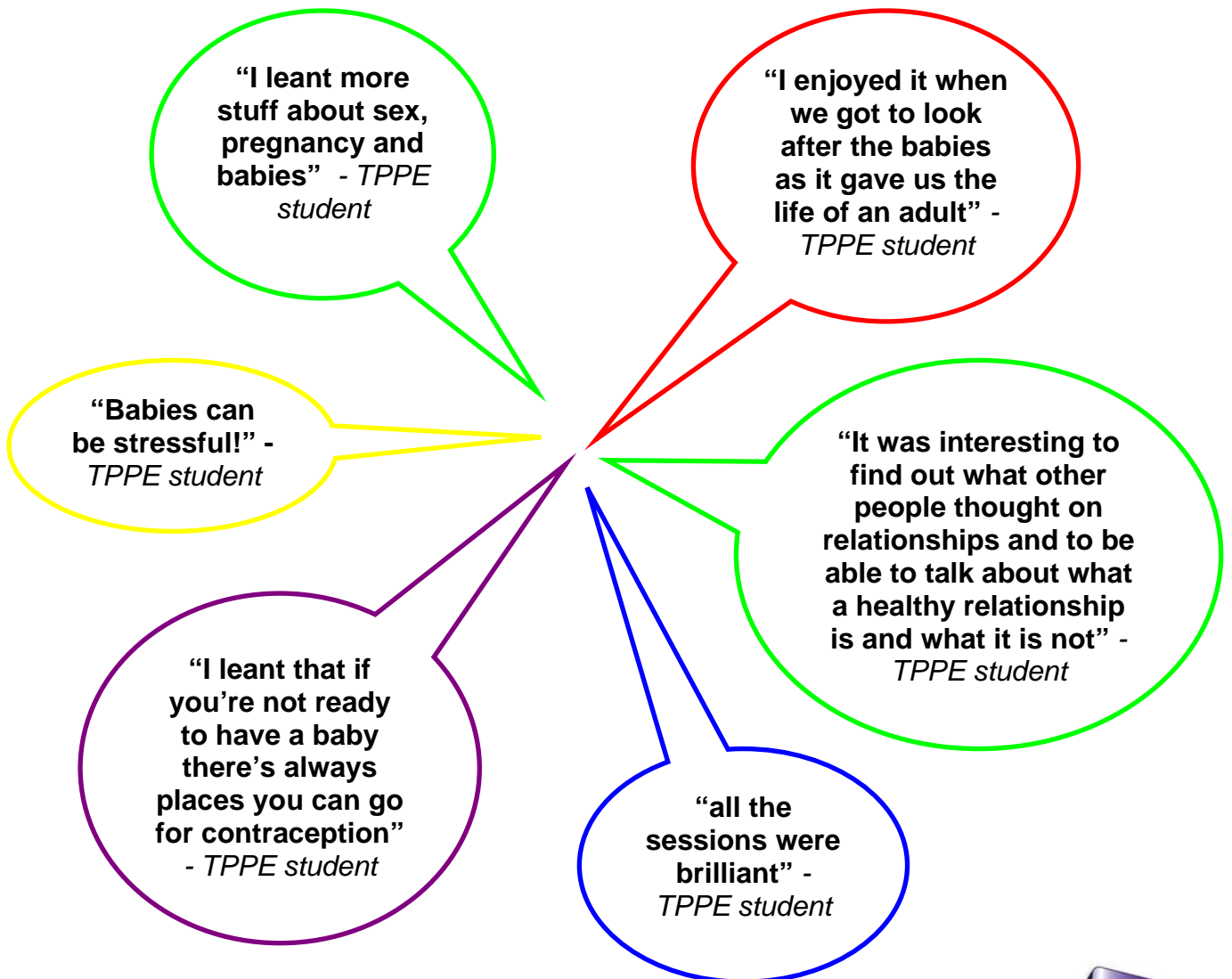
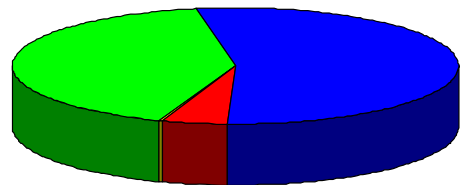
The peer educators were...



I learnt new things about sex and relationships that we don't usually learn in school...



I know where to go for help and advice...



Haddockfield Secure Training Centre & Teenage Parent Peer Education Programme

The programme was delivered to detained young offenders. There were two single gender groups between the age range of 13-17 years. The programme was a huge success and well received by trainees and staff.

Since Haddockfield STC has been open they have developed a specialised team of professionals who work with the individual demands of a mixed population of 12 to 17 year olds. The young people are subject to detention and training orders, other custodial sentences, or have been remanded to custody. The centre has the ability to manage this difficult and vulnerable group via a range of services available.

Once a young person has been placed in the care of Haddockfield STC the centre staff endeavour to help them by providing opportunities for change, such as education, offending behaviour assessments and interventions. In addition to this the centre works to promote and maintain positive support from many areas but particularly their family.

Rationale for Haddockfield STC (HSTC) and Youth Voice partnership: It is well documented that targeted work with individuals who have a greater risk of early pregnancy is key to reducing the conception rates of teenagers in England. A high percentage of Haddockfield STC young people can be identified as within the most vulnerable at risk groups in society.

Many of the young people live within areas with high deprivation and these are the areas which are targeted by the National Teenage Pregnancy Strategy. Teenage pregnancy remains a significant challenge for the North East region as a whole, with variable rates apparent for all local areas. All local authority areas contain wards that are classified as 'hot spot' wards, and are defined by having teenage conception rates which are amongst the highest 20% in the UK. More than half of all conceptions occur in the most deprived 20% of wards in the UK. In addition, there is further deviation from the national norm with regards to conception outcome, with fewer young women opting to terminate their pregnancy in the North East. To some extent this is unsurprising, alongside the North East Index and Multiple Deprivation, as young people living in areas of deprivation are more likely to continue with their pregnancy than those in more affluent areas.

Youth Voice and HSTC therefore engaged in a working partnership and consequently Youth Voice delivered the Teenage Pregnancy Peer Education Programme [TPPE] to a group of young people between 15th September 2010 and 27th October 2010.

This programme was conducted for six weekly sessions with sessions lasting one hour. Two groups were identified to attend the sessions separately and were single gender. Both groups were small, the male group included six young people and the female group included four. The learning environment varied as rooms changed at times, however this did not appear to have any impact on participation levels of the groups. Throughout the delivery the young people worked in small groups or worked in pairs. They were given the opportunity to ask questions throughout each session.

at regular intervals. The young people appeared to speak openly and honestly and contributed to discussion well. They asked valuable questions and shared their individual experiences.

The outcomes: All the sessions conducted were a great success and the young people participated really well. Throughout the course male and female young people gave both verbal and written evaluations which were extremely positive after each session. A very high percentage demonstrated that they strongly agreed that they had met the learning outcomes of each session. One area for improvement was identified for more leaflets to be made available for the young people as they enjoyed taking these away with them. Many stated that they had read them and had enjoyed them.

Some of the comments from the young people about the course are:-

"Good fun and learnt a lot"

"It was as good as it gets"

"I enjoyed learning to care for a baby"

Hassockfield STC staff identified that the programme could be improved by promoting a discussion around sexual identity. This is something that the programme could include at a more focused level. Youth Voice staff agreed to discuss how to incorporate this into the programme in a way that is age appropriate and suitable for all services and schools.

Feedback from staff at Hassockfield: The partnership which has been developed with Youth Voice through their Teenage Pregnancy Peer Education Programme has been positive and complements the programmes which are offered within the centre. The young people reported that they engaged well and felt confident and comfortable to participate due to the Hassockfield STC member of staff being present throughout the sessions.

An evaluation meeting was held on 10th November 2010 between Youth Voice and Hassockfield STC staff, the outcome of which was very positive. Both parties felt the programme delivery had been a great success and had had a positive effect on the young people involved. However, funding restraints for both services mean it is difficult to schedule in any more programmes.

Code of Conduct (COC)

The COC is a quality assurance tool developed and used by young people to make sure that the services they receive meet the standards that have been created by young people who use services.

This process is also used by agencies to gather the opinions of service users on other issues, including possible improvements or changes to the service.

The COC is supported by Newcastle City Council and the Adult and Culture Services Commissioning Team (previously known as Supporting People), who request the Code of Conduct report in the self assessment submitted by services as part of their Service Quality Framework self assessment.

There are six guidelines that young people feel organisations should meet when working with vulnerable groups:

- ★ Young people should be treated with **respect** and treated equally.
- ★ All decisions should be explained **clearly** and correctly, and **accurate** information should be given.
- ★ Give young people support for **all their needs** and/or provide advice and help in order to access the support they require.
- ★ All staff should have **positive attitudes** towards the young people they deal with.
- ★ All organisations should have **training** to work with young people on a wide range of issues.
- ★ **Information** should be given to young people about what support/help will be offered from the service.

How is the Code of Conduct carried out?

Trained Youth Voice volunteers visit organisations and gather information over a few visits. During these visits they will be looking for evidence to show that the guidelines are being met. The evidence may be gathered in lots of ways which include interviews with staff and service users, questionnaires and telephone interviews with young people. Once all of the information is gathered, they collate the information and produce a COC report listing any necessary recommendations for the organisation. This Code of Conduct process is reviewed and updated annually and agencies are visited on an annual basis.

How are young people involved?

New young people are constantly being trained and recruited to take part in the code of conduct. Young people feel taking part in the code of conduct *“ensures services are doing their jobs properly”* and believe *“you can see positive changes being made in services for young people”*.

Services that have taken part

In 2010-2011 the young people have carried out the COC with the following services:

- ✓ YHN - Young People's Service - Floating Support
- ✓ YHN - Young People's Service - Homeless Prevention
- ✓ YHN - Young People's Service – Hostel
- ✓ YHN - Young People's Service – Supported Flats
- ✓ Stonham Tyneside Foyer
- ✓ DePaul UK - Simonside House
- ✓ Norcare - Cumberland House
- ✓ The Cyrenians – Virginia House
- ✓ The Cyrenians – Elliott House
- ✓ The Cyrenians – Ron Eager House
- ✓ The Cyrenians – Gateshead Hostel

Recommendation example

A positive example of how our recommendations have helped improve a service is the issues we raised on behalf of the service users within some of the services we have visited. The service users felt the service could improve in some significant areas and made the following suggestions:

- Security to be looked into, back door/smoking area is unlocked.
- Possible rewards for volunteer work within the service.
- A cleaning rota to be agreed with residents.
- A professional cleaner to do a thorough clean weekly.
- Room searches to be a formalised/procedure clarified with residents.
- Allocation of a worker to be done sooner.
- Rights and responsibilities to be highlighted when welcomed, discussed through properly and understood.
- Work on communicating better with each other. ie, workers with young people, workers with management/external agencies.
- Build relations/understanding between local police and service.
- Promises not to be broken.



Young people interviewing members of staff from YHN's Young People's Service for the Code of Conduct

Youth Voice Drop In

The Youth Voice Drop in is a regular opportunity for young people to 'touch base' with Youth Voice staff and find out what else is going on that week. Travel expenses are reimbursed for those young people who attend and we always have some food available too!

The drop in runs from 3.30 – 5.30pm on a Monday in the Youth Voice room. We share good news from the week, play games, participate in workshops, share information about events and services in the city and give the young people an opportunity to get involved in any other Youth Voice activities.

Board Representation

In December 2010 we also elected a member of Youth Voice to become a young people's champion and represent our views to YHN's Board. Julia meets with a member of the Board, Julie, every 6 weeks to discuss young people's concerns and ideas and Julie is then able to feed them back to the rest of the Board members. In this way we are able to help YHN continue to provide not only relevant services, but also the very best services to each and every tenant they serve. In March 2011 Julia delivered a presentation to the Board of YHN, providing the members with information about some of the projects Youth Voice have been involved in and some of our plans for the future.

Youth Achievement Awards (YAA)

Young people who volunteer with Youth Voice are encouraged to work towards Youth Achievement Awards, which are an accreditation scheme which recognises young people's achievements and participation. YAAs are accredited by ASDAN and fit into the National Qualification Framework so are a good opportunity for our young people, many of whom have not got any formal qualifications, to demonstrate their skills and abilities. Awards are available at four levels:

Bronze –recognising young people's development through taking part in activities.

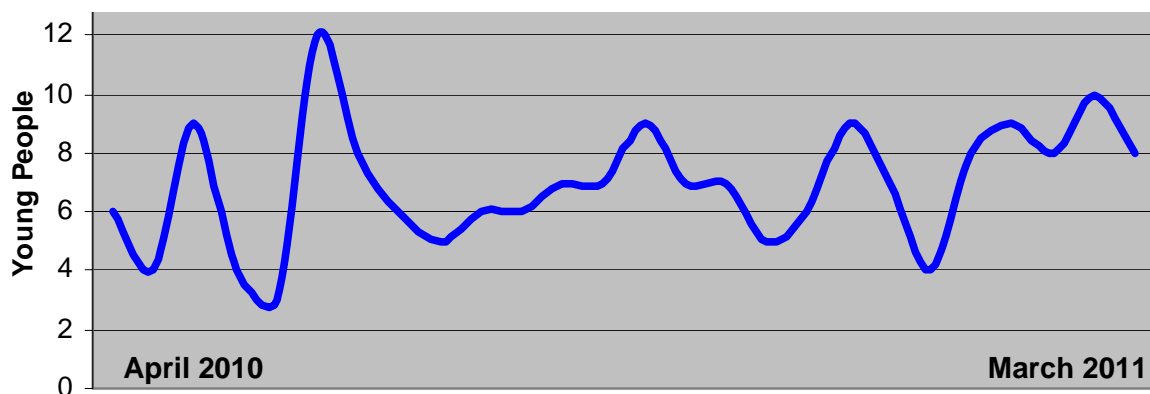
Silver –demonstrating the skills gained through helping to organise activities.

Gold –recognising achievements in planning, organising and leading activities.

Platinum –demonstrating leadership through peer education or similar roles.

We currently have 4 peer educators working towards a bronze award and 7 of the young people participating in the European Exchange working towards a gold award.

Youth Voice Attendance 2010-2011



Young People's Service Positive Activities for Young People 2010-2011 Report



What is 'Positive Activities for Young People'?

Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) is a national initiative bringing together a range of funding streams for 'diversionary' activities for children and young people.

PAYP aims to:

- ★ reduce crime and anti-social behaviour
- ★ support young people back into education and training
- ★ support the transition from primary to secondary school
- ★ bring together young people from different communities
- ★ provide access to quality sports, arts and cultural activities
- ★ give young people opportunities for personal development
- ★ encourage volunteering and active citizenship

Funding is available through Connexions to:

- ★ Provide a programme of diversionary and developmental activities to a hard to reach client group to achieve a range of positive outcomes for participating young people
- ★ A year round programme of activities to encourage and support young people to engage in volunteering and employment opportunities
- ★ To allow young people to have fun in a safe environment, build friendship and support networks
- ★ Provide access to a range of high quality arts, sports and cultural activities
- ★ Bring together young people from different geographical and ethnic communities to help break down prejudice and misunderstanding
- ★ Give young people opportunities for personal development including the development of self-discipline, self-confidence and self-respect, enabling them to communicate more effectively with a range of people and work as part of a team
- ★ Increase success rates for sustainable tenancies and provide young people with the skills to live independently
- ★ Strengthen partnerships across the city and develop strategies to move young people on to other opportunities.

Who is PAYP for?

Young people at risk of engaging in crime or anti-social behaviour are targeted and encouraged to participate in a range of 'positive' activities. 'At-Risk Criteria' has been developed to identify the core target group and enable referral onto the scheme. This is centered on one or more of the factors below:

- ★ Engagement with Youth Offending Team
- ★ Known to Police (arrested, convictions, custody)
- ★ Anti-social behaviour/causing a nuisance
- ★ Social Care involvement
- ★ Educational attainment/behaviour of concern
- ★ School exclusion (fixed-term or permanent) or truancy
- ★ Special educational needs/learning difficulties
- ★ Vulnerable Groups: refugee/asylum seekers, teenage parents, substance mis-users, young people leaving care, young carers, etc.

What can young people do?

We aimed to work with various providers to ensure that a wide range of activities are available to young people, particularly during school holiday periods. These include youth centres, voluntary groups, private companies and specialist facilitators.

Opportunities were available to participate in sports, outdoor activities, arts and craft, dance, drama, music, video, motor projects, conservation work, educational workshops, training courses and day trips.

Spending criteria:

Residentials	Leisure activities
Outdoor activities	Food and refreshments for activities
Day trips	Transport for activities
Staff costs	Celebration events
Resources for activities	Consultation & participation

Your Homes Newcastle Young People’s Service and PAYP

The Positive Activities strand of work came from feedback at the YPS team meeting and also through feedback from the young people supported by the service that they would like to be involved in a range of activities. We recognize that not all young people are ready to engage in group work activities, and their participation in decision making can be reduced when there are not a range of methods used to engage them. Many of the young people supported by YHN have limited resources to take part in positive activities and would benefit from the skills they could develop through their involvement. It also allows them to build relationships and feel valued.

The activities range from residentials, to outdoor activities, to consultations, group work sessions, roller disco, dance and other events. All activities were free and transport costs and refreshments were also covered. There was no cost to the young person to get involved.

The activities have been booked in consultation with young people who are involved in the positive activities steering group and are funded through Connexions ‘Positive Activities for Young People’ (PAYP).

For 10/11 the Young People’s Service received £17000 from Connexions to engage young people in a range of positive activities and this was allocated in a coordinated way, to ensure it creates a range of activities and events to benefit our young people.

Staff have been involved in the coordination of this funding through the workers positive activities steering group, and through consultation at team meetings and via email.

A risk assessment was required to be submitted along with the application to ensure that activity was within health and safety guidelines.

We coordinated the approach so that activities were not on at the same time, where possible, as this ensured there was lots going on over the week and young people were not made to choose between things they wanted to do.

Each activity was evaluated by young people and staff, and a yearly report is produced to highlight the outcomes and achievements over the year.

Each team within the service was allocated an amount of money to organise activities which was allocated by the manager. How the funding was spent was up to that team to decide with the young people they support, as long as it fitted in with the principles of PAYP.

Each team nominated one staff member to act as the PAYP lead and liaison person. This person attended regular meetings to feed back on progress, uptake and budget spend. Stats were collated and were relayed the Connexions to show how the funds were being spent, and what outcomes were being met for young people.

Youth Voice coordinated activities that met engagement and participation targets as set out in the Young People's Strategy and these were accessible by all young people in the service and also by working in partnership with other organisations across the city.

Youth Voice were also responsible for organising four full service events this financial year, all funded from PAYP. This included a summer and autumn 'Fun Day' and Christmas Parties for young people and young families.

Activities and Resources

Full Young People's Service – fun days

Go Karting

Blue Reef Aquarium

Live Theatre

Kielder - day trip

Kielder - residential

Theatre Royal

Pizza making

Beamish Museum

Whitehouse Farm

Cinema

Dining out

Canoeing expedition

Roller disco

Newburn Activity Centre – range of summer activities

Skiing

High ropes

Picnics

BBQ's

Christmas panto

Christmas craft session

Pamper day

Passports for young people – for the European exchange

Young Families' Christmas party

Young People Christmas party

Youth Voice Christmas party

Venue for Youth Independence Forum

Youth Achievement Award resources

Spooky Halloween residential

Camera

Camcorder

Hi-Fi

Suitable clothing to take part in activities

Evaluation

All of the young people attending provided feedback for all of the sessions they attended. This allowed the staff to evaluate the activity to ensure it was value for money and also that young people benefited from the experience.

**A total of 527
young people
attended
activities funded
through PAYP
from April 2010 –
March 2011**

These are some of the comments they gave after their experiences:

What did you enjoy about the activity?

- I loved it!
- I've done stuff I've never done before
- It was a right laugh
- Watching Karen capsize!
- I enjoyed having something to do
- Choosing the activities we done
- Getting away from my flat
- It was good that the staff got involved
- I enjoyed having a meal with other young people
- It was better than I expected and I enjoyed the food
- I had never done outside stuff before, it was great!

What did you not enjoy?

- Not having enough sleep!
- The weather
- Other young people not doing what they were told
- Having to get up early

What did you learn?

- How to canoe
- How to put up a tent
- That I can do new things if I try
- I learnt what I could do near to my home
- Where I could take my baby and have fun
- That getting places isn't that hard
- Newcastle has lots to do!

Were the staff friendly and helpful?

- Yes, it was more like the young people who were helpful to the staff on the ice!
- They're dead patient
- The staff were a right laugh
- The staff organised a taxi so me and my baby could get here
- It was great to watch the staff do the activities
- They make a lush Christmas dinner!

Positive Activities for Young People



Positive Activities for Young People



Positive Activities for Young People



2010 Canoeing Trip



In August 2010 a group of 10 young people, three YHN staff and one volunteer canoed 33 miles down the river Tweed between Peebles and Kelso over four days. We were led on the trip by Jason and Liz from Newburn Activity Centre.

At YHN Young People's Services we believe in giving young people a voice in the community they live in. One of the ways we try to achieve this is by

supporting young people toward gaining the confidence and skills they need to express themselves. During the planning and execution of a trip of this nature, young people were exposed to and actively partook in a variety of useful and transferable skills.

Throughout the trip the young people were responsible for setting up camp, pitching their tents, cooking breakfasts and evening meals and preparing packed lunches for their time on the water. This was largely organized 'on the hoof' with people stepping forward as and when required and supporting others who needed a hand. During any free time that remained some of those with too much energy still had time for an impromptu kick-about with a football or a walk in the surrounding countryside.

Some of the skills that the young people learnt were:

Organisation – young people who came on the trip attended planning meetings beforehand, and during the trip were responsible for preparing their equipment and camp.

Negotiation, Compromise and Perseverance– finding themselves in new and different situations meant that the young people needed to be adaptable, find a compromise with each other and negotiate roles. They also had to persevere and support others to achieve their goals.

Confidence and Self Esteem – the trip was important to the young people as they took great pride in achieving goals, both individual and as part of the group.

Teamwork – everyone had to work together in a variety of tasks otherwise they wouldn't reach the destination, have anywhere to sleep or get any dinner! Young people quickly realised this and encouraged everyone to work together.



"I loved doing the rapids they were the best."

"it was all good especially when people capsized and got wet."

"it was good that everyone got stuck in and we finished the trip as a team."

Youth Voice Contact Details

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YHN Young People's Service

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The Youth Voice team would like to thank all the organisations and individuals who have supported our work this year. We are looking forward to working with you in the coming year to continue to support young people to have their voices heard.