



Urban Art Project
Mental Health Transition pilot
Age 16-20

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Promoting the Rights of Children & Young People

Introduction

Investing in Children CIC and the Waddington Street Centre worked in partnership to deliver a 10 week pilot art project focussing on the transition of young people aged 16-20 from CAMHS to adult mental health support services.

The project was initially developed by a group of young people following the outcome CAMHS review which liC undertook in the summer of 2015 on behalf of the CCG, in addition to the feedback received during the Mental Health review which liC delivered for Public Health between September and December 2015.

Within the CAMHS review and Public Health's Mental Health review a large number of older young people commented on a number of issues relating to the transition from Children and young people's mental health services to Adult Services. Some of the issues identified by the young people included:

- Having a personalised transition, every young person is different and require varying levels of support.
- Young people with learning disabilities require a longer transitional period to prepare them for change.
- Young people in care need to know who will be supporting them during the transition.
- Having a choice of what service young people can access as Adult Mental Health Services is broader than CAMHS.
- Who will be involved in the transition process?
- Being able to access Peer Support.

Following on from the CAMHS Review, a group of young people involved in the review formed a focus group with some of the CAMHS Manager to develop an Action Plan to discuss how the recommendations which came out of the review can be achieved. One of the discussions was about providing access to Adult services before young people turn 18 so they know what to expect. The young people involved suggested developing a group activity that is fun, which also links in with the young people's request for informal opportunities to access peer support.

With the support of the Waddington Street Centre who were keen to engage with older young people, an art project was developed in line with some external funding the Centre had accessed through the Colour Your Life funding. The project consisted of 2hour sessions over 10 consecutive Tuesday evenings between January and March 2016. In total there were 10 places available to young people, 8 of which took up the opportunity to engage in the project.

The Project

The project the allowed young people the freedom to express their emotions and feelings through a range of art techniques with the support of a course tutor who is an experienced artist. The young people were able to identify any interests and art techniques that they enjoyed doing or that they were interested in trying out.

Each session was very informal and the young people did not have to commit to all 10 weeks as with many of the young people, at some point during the project they had prior commitments to attend instead.

The first couple of sessions were very informal taster sessions so that the course tutor could gauge the levels of ability and interest from the different members of the group. The young people took part in a number of activities including an icebreaker sketch activity and creating some personalised stencils. The next few weeks the young people were involved in progressing with their stencil designs as well as tie dying materials including t-shirts and bags.



Peer Support

Over the 10 week programme the young people took the opportunity to talk to each other about a range of ideas and issues and other important things going on in their lives including exams and being stressed, home life, planning for the future at university or college, work life, friendships and relationships to name a few.

Some of the young people openly acknowledged during the sessions how much they had gained from attending the project being able to talk to other young people about important issues in such an informal environment. These are some of the things the young people said

about the project: ***“It’s brilliant, I don’t know what I would have done if I didn’t come here.”***

“When you have been stressed out at home or sixth form you can just come and chill out and try new things it’s great.”

As the developed so did the young people’s art work and they started to produce some fantastic pieces of work which would later form part of an exhibition within the Waddington Street Centre.

Midway through the course once the young people had had the opportunity to experiment with different art styles and techniques and find out what their interests were, the young people were given an open brief to use explore ‘What’s in Your Head’ using art.

Some of the group cracked straight on with new ideas, some carried on with pieces of work they had already started with and other young people talked about what was going on at that time in their life to look for inspiration for their work.



Feedback

The feedback from the young people throughout the course was extremely positive and the standard of artwork the young people produced based on their interests and thoughts and feelings was extremely impressive. When the young people were asked what they thought of the project this is what some of the young people had to say:

“I’ve loved it.”

“It’s been great.”

“It’s so calming, it’s been a great stress relief.”

“It’s been good getting to try new things.”

“Nice time to relax.”

“Fun, cool art stuff to do, and met some awesome people.”

Although the young people were given a lot of freedom during the course, the young people commented on the how much they valued the support they received during the sessions in particular relating to the course tutor, and also the quality of the venue and resources with comments including:

“Very kind, Keen, helpful and friendly.”

“Excellent- well set and equipped”

Conclusion

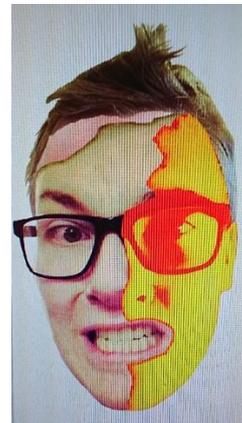
Throughout the project the young people that engaged clearly showed expressed how beneficial informal peer support is to young people, especially during stressful times in young people lives including exams and approaching adulthood.

Although numbers at some of the sessions were low due to other commitments the young people that took part enjoyed the course and identified how much they had got from the project.

The project was developed by young people involved in the CAMHS review and the project itself was promoted through the CAMHS service right across the County although the referrals themselves came through liC and other Colour Your Life funded projects.

As agreed by Waddington Street, some of the fantastic work which has been produced by the young people will go up on display within the Centre. In addition to this, the Waddington Street Centre has seen a clear value from this type of engagement and agree to extend the project by a further 10 weeks.





A special thanks go to the young people that attended the project over the 10 weeks, and also to Waddington Street for the fantastic support they have given the young people making the first Urban Art pilot project a real success.

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