



INVESTING IN CHILDREN

Membership Evaluation

Date September 2006

PROJECT NAME Barnardo's Teenage Pregnancy Support Unit

PROJECT LOCATION 4th Floor, Warwick House
Grantham Road
Sandyford
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SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

Sector Health
Ages 13-19 years
Area City wide
Ward

Number of beneficiaries



investing in children

Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

Barnardos/Teenage Pregnancy Support Unit

As part of Barnardos – Newcastle Independence Network, the Teenage Pregnancy Support Team offers support to young parents and parents to be. The team is made up of many professionals from different service providers and they see themselves as an integral part of the Newcastle Teenage Pregnancy Strategy.

The work of this team is offered in dialogue and negotiation with young people they work with. The service is provided sensitively and works with the young women from the beginning. All new directions taken, materials developed and service improvements are made with the views and suggestions of the young people.

There is clear evidence of dialogue and change as follows:

In the Beginning - When a young woman makes contact with the project they are offered 'Decision Making Counselling.'

In May 2005 the Teenage Pregnancy Support Team created a booklet to assist young people in thinking about what being pregnant means to them. The booklet helps the young people make decisions that are best for them. *The workers designed the booklet but ensured that young people were able to give their views of the document before the final copy was produced.* (Please see booklet attached).

The Scan Clinic - This was initially set up because some young people were overlooked in the system. Now young people are offered an optional scan at 12 weeks if young women present as pregnant to any service.

All services have a user feedback form, one question is 'What can make it better, what can we change.' *One young person suggested a more young person friendly environment.*

- **All under 18's have scans at the same time on a Friday afternoon**

Young people then continue with a 20 and 32 week scan.

Antenatal Diary - When workers work with young women of school age, they can work with those who attend Ashlyn's School. *In July last year Justina Hamson worked with young people from Ashlyn's to produce and Antenatal Dairy, please see attached.*

Young Parent Support Group - This group is run for young mum's in the east of the city. Sian works in partnership with SureStart to provide this service. The group secured some funding for talks and activities. *Alongside this the group*

produced a leaflet to advertise the group and encourage other young people to come. (Please see attached).

I visited the group in May and joined the young people in a healthy snack and a general chat. A chat where the young people were not only supported by workers but they supported each other.

Gemma, Sophie, Catherine, Anna, Gemma, Charlotte, Sarah, Danillelle and Amy as well as others meet on a regular basis. Gemma told me that ***'there is a crèche if you want to put your children in, it means we get a break too!'*** She also said ***'we get asked what we would like to do, we look at the suggestions and talk about what we want.'***

Feet First - Although this group no longer exist as such I feel it important to highlight their achievements in order to show their transition into 'Peer Education'. Feet First were the original young mum's group. **Their participation work produced many great things.** *Feet First produced a magazine called 24/7 (Please see attached). They also produced a video. Both the magazine and video were produced to tell other young people 'how it really is, the good and the bad, to have children when you're young' taken for inside cover 24/7 – Nov 2003.*

The young people received funding form Connexions in 2004 to create the video. The video was produced by Swingbridge Video Productions. The original draft was 40 minutes long but with continued work they cut it to 26 minutes.

The group saw the video launched at the 'Tyneside Cinema' it received lots of media and TV publicity. The group originally met at WEYES and were challenged to create something collectively. The information is still available across the city.

The first Feet group then moved on to train as peer educators, developing on from their magazine and video production. They joined with other young people from Scotswood not only to work with other young people but also to share their experiences with Medical students.

- **Young people devised and created the sessions.**

The young people use their resources in the sessions. They do two sessions with the medical students in Newcastle.

Counselling Course - I met the young people at the end of their Level 2 Counselling session. The team offered some young women a Level 1 in Communication and Counselling Course. *The young people wanted to do more due to the success of the course, the team are continuing the Level 1 but have succeeded in providing the Level 2 in Counselling from the NIN building rather than at a college, they found college harder to access and felt less comfortable. **This is what the young people wanted and this is what they have got.***

Debbie, Suzanne and Michelle have done it all! They have been involved of all of the above. The girls had nothing but praise for the Teenage Pregnancy Support Team. They recognized the huge impact being involved with the unit has had on their life, from the birth of their children right up until now! Michelle has been involved for about 5 years. As part of the original Feet First Michelle is on the front cover of the 24/7 magazine and the video. Michelle told me that they planned all the stuff and how that has progressed into the medical training. All of the girls told me that it they had gained so much confidence because of all their involvement.

Not only had they gained in confidence but they had all gained extra training and were well on the way to gaining qualifications. Debbie said ***'doing the counselling course from here has been great. It's difficult to do at college because of childcare and work! They sort it all out for you, taxis to get here and get home, childcare, so it makes it all easier. You know there are loads of us who have tried college but it just didn't work'***. I know since my visit the girls have sat their exams so I wish them all the success they deserve.

Debbie also said that the support the Teenage Pregnancy Support Team has given to her has been a ***'Godsend. I have been away; I went to Nottingham but when I moved back I just phone Sian and got back involved'***. Suzanne is the newest recruit and she echoed what Michelle and Debbie had to say ***'Sue really helped me with benefits, they are absolutely great, they have knowledge about anything, they know how to help you. They can give you options.'***

The young people I spoke with in no uncertain terms told me what being involved with the Teenage Pregnancy Support Unit has meant to them, they also felt it very important to point out they have never felt judged at any time, everything has been confidential. Being involved with the team has also given them the opportunity to make new friends as well. It appears that the young women take their involvement for granted, it is what they have come to expect from the work that they participate in. However the support they have all received is immeasurable and has truly had a positive impact on their lives.

Therefore on behalf of the young people and all who have benefited from the support of The Teenage Pregnancy Team I have no hesitation in recommending that Barnados –Teenage Pregnancy Support Team receive their Investing in Children membership.

**Helen Mulhearn
Membership Coordinator
Investing in Children**

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