

INVESTING IN CHILDREN

Membership Evaluation

Date May 2005

PROJECT NAME	Interactive Project
PROJECT LOCATION	Raby Street Youth Centre Brinkburn Street Byker Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 2AT
CONTACT NAME	Trevor Palmer
PHONE	0191 265 2982
E-MAIL	trevor.palmer@newcastle.gov.uk
ASSESSOR	Helen Mulhearn

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

Based at Raby St, Play & Youth Centre the project involves the young people referred in individual and a whole range of group activities that are planned with them. A programme of activities is designed by young people and staff and a long list of activities is discussed by everyone until a consensus is reached. There is also an "ideas box" where young people can put forward their views. As one young person told Investing in Children, "we've asked for stuff, we're doing stuff and we organised it".

Sector	Youth Provision
Ages	8-12 years
Area	East
Ward	Byker

Number of beneficiaries



Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

Interactive Project

The Interactive Project is based at Raby Street Play and Youth Centre. The project is currently funded by Newcastle Children's Fund until March 2006.

The project actively promotes children and young people's participation and offers them the opportunity to be involved in their own identified programmes. (Please see attached sheet).

Opportunities for Dialogue – start at the very beginning. From an agency referral Interactive project staff contact the child or young person and make a home visit. During this visit the workers discuss the project with the child or young person and their parents and outline what is possible.

The programme and **action plan** is then discussed together, as well as a Child Profile form being filled in. From here the children and young people can decide whether they want to work **individually** or within the groups that are on offer to them via Interactive Project.

Groups – Groups come together for different activities within the Interactive Project. Children and young people are drawn together to plan activities, to achieve common goals and mostly to have fun with other young people. For example:

The J – Track – a group of girls planned a residential to complete an award scheme. They secured funding from the Keyfund to make this happen. (Please see attached information). From this positive activity the group developed into a girls group. Other groups are set up along the way to work with young people as and when projects take shape and activities are offered.

Last year's programme involved a 'Participation Project' facilitated by The Children's Society, Voices Project. This was a pro-active move by the workers to engage the children and young people they worked with in dialogue to affect change in how the programme developed, instead of the workers creating the activity programme for the young people.

One to one's – These are the individual support sessions available to all the children and young people. Here young people can plan their own 'involvement' in the project with **a worker**.

When the first workshop took place an endless list of activities was created, a short list was drawn up where the group gave consideration to the suitability of each and everyone.

During this time the group also discussed how best to find out the views of all children and young people, they agreed the way forward was an idea box.

Most of the young people involved in this project enjoyed the process and said they 'thought the programme was better and that they enjoyed being asked their opinions.'

One of our project workers – Iftikhar Hussain met with some young people involved in the Interactive Project – these are some of the comments Iftikhar recorded whilst talking with the young people, all who had been involved in last year's summer programme and have remained involved since.

Sarah said 'the trips get you off the streets' she also shared that 'the only thing I don't like is that sometimes other young people won't listen.'

Danielle said 'I like doing activities, cooking and first aid', she also told Iftikhar that 'we plan things with young people to go on trips and activities, we went to different youth clubs and gave them money to go on trips.'

Olivia told Iftikhar about the trips she had been on which included 'Quad biking, Wet 'n' Wild, ice skating, bowling, Metroland – we also have new equipment, a dance mat and playstation.'

The girls made a variety of positive comments about the staff team, apparently:

'They are all funny'
'Rob's proper mad'
'Carol's a loony toon'
'Bron is a mad one'

What more can you say! Iftikhar also met with the group involved with the 'Adventure Service'. Once again all the comments Iftikhar received were very positive.

'It's good, 'I like the centre cos it's open to go to', I like the staff in the centre.' 'I like the hellish activities.'

'We've asked for stuff, we're doing stuff and we organised it.'

It also appears that 'the boys asked for football and they got it' and according to the notes the girls would like their own team too.

All of the information I have about the Interactive Project suggests that the staff team have been very pro-active over the last year in changing their practice in such a way that the children and young people are involved in meaningful dialogue. From the comments highlighted made by the young people, I believe this is confirmed. The changes speak for themselves, more young people involved in planning, organising and taking responsibility for what happens and how.

Therefore it is on behalf of all the children and young people that I would like to recommend that the Interactive Project receives its Investing in Children membership.

Helen Mulhearn
Investing in Children
May 2005

Interaction pays off

The Interactive Project at Raby Street's Play and Youth Centre puts children and young people at the heart of its planning. Once a young person is referred to Interactive, a member of staff visits him or her at home to discuss what is possible. Together with the young person's parents, an action plan is drawn up, and the young person decides whether to work on his or her own, or within a group. He or she can have one-to-one sessions with staff at any time to talk about how this involvement is going and whether it needs to change.

A variety of groups come together to achieve their own particular goals, plan activities and have fun with each other. For example, a group of girls planned a residential to complete an award scheme, and developed into a longer-term girls group.

The young people drew up their own list of possible activities, and agreed to have an ideas box to ensure everyone's voice would be heard. As a result, most "think the programme is better and that we enjoy being asked their opinions."

"...we've asked for stuff, we're doing stuff, and we organised it..."

Sarah says, "The trips get you off the streets. The only thing I don't like is that sometimes other young people won't listen."

According to the Adventure Service group, "We've asked for stuff, we're doing stuff, and we organised it." Also, "the boys asked for football and they got it," and the girls would like their own team too.

The Investing in Children assessor says, "The changes speak for themselves. More young people involved in planning, organising and taking responsibility for what happens and how."

[suggested pics – football team or one-to-one session]