



investing in children

Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

John Boste Youth Centre

For the purpose of this evaluation I met with Brian, Cain, Liam, Kerry and Mark.

John Boste Youth Centre opened its doors again in 2002 after being closed for two years. During the early stages of re-opening, the centre offered one session per week, which has now increased to three nights youth provision, a football team, job club and many other youth based activities that the young people asked for.

The staff members are very committed to encouraging young people to take a lead on the development of the club. They have developed a framework of opportunity for the young people who use the club to decide on what they want to do at the centre and provisions are based around this process.

Opportunities for Dialogue:

Evaluation Event.

The lead youth worker introduced the evaluation event to find out what young people think of the youth centre. The emphasis of this event was for all the young people to come together and discuss any issues that were important to them and then to assist in developing the Business Plan for the centre.

There was a change in this process because some of the young people did not want to work in one large group. The young people, therefore, decided to work individually by adding their own notes to the different questions about the centre that had been set by the staff.

This event happened in March of this year and the Business Plan is still to be finalised. This aspect of the project is still to be fully developed and it will be interesting to discover how young people over the next year, might influence and make some changes to the project, through this positive method of involving young people in the evaluation.

Young people Planning Group.

Twenty young people signed up to this group as a result of the evaluation event. The group is still in early development so when coming to re-evaluate the project next year it will be interesting to discover how the young people have developed things that are important to them, such as finding out how other young people who use the centre communicated with this initial group.

Dialogue and Change:

Job Club

A Job Club has been created based on the needs and ideas of young people inquiring about what support the centre could offer to young people in finding employment after they leave school.

Brian, a member of the youth club for the last few years and a member of the job club, explained, “*There are fifteen of us who have come here since we left school because we wanted to get a job and for the youth club to help us.*”

Jamie added, “*Jodie has helped get ten of us into work.*” He also told me, “*I am doing a construction course.*”

Liam, also a member of the job club, told me about a change in how the club has responded to his inquiry. “*I asked about getting my provisional motorcycle licence.*” Liam went on to explain, “*The club is now going to pay for it.*” He also added, “*This will help me get to places for work.*”

All the young people I spoke with were very pleased with how the centre was offering them support through the development of this job club. This highlights the positive steps taken by the centre to respond to the ideas of some of the young people and make changes according to this.

Football Team.

Cain gave a clear account about how this came about. “*We had been asking about a football team for a while so Jodie arranged for some friendly matches with other local teams.*” The centre is now going to be entering a team into a Sunday league starting in September called, THE BOSTE.

Summer Activities.

Kerry explained, “*All the club members got asked what we wanted to do and most have been planned for the summer.*” Some of these activities are white water rafting, snorkelling, beach BBQ, camping, gorge walking and a trip to Lightwater Valley. She also added, “*We helped plan the programme and some young people asked for some of last year's activities to be put on again this year.*” These activities are go-karting and Aerial Extreme. The centre applied to the Local Network Fund and received £500 to help support the young people's ideas and make them happen.

DJ Equipment.

Many young people attended the centre to just mix and listen to music in the company of their friends, so the centre has made some changes to the building to meet the needs of the young people. They have built a mini mixing area where young people can DJ.

Kerry explained, “*We wanted to buy our own records, so Jodie gave us some money and Sarah and James went to Reflex in town to buy some tunes.*”

The young people have started to take ownership of this area by developing it in design, colour and now buying equipment.

John Boste Youth Centre has, and continues, to develop and increase opportunities for young people to be listened to and then create activities based on the inclusive methods to involve young people in decisions. The young people with whom I met spoke very positively of Jodie Grieverson, the lead youth worker, and believed that they were listened to and could generally do what they wanted at the centre. This is because they seem to have an effective working relationship with the staff of the centre when deciding and making decisions about what they want to do at the Centre.

For these reasons I would like to recommend that John Boste Youth Centre receive Investing in Children Membership and look forward to further developments made by the young people at the centre when coming to re-evaluate the project for membership next year.

This report has been endorsed by the following young people who are members of the John Boste Youth Centre. They are Mark, Liam, Nathan, Cain, Tania, Chantelle, Christina, Amy and Jade. I would like to thank all the young people and Jody Grieverson for their support when evaluating the project for Investing in Children Membership and finish by saying Well-done.

Rob Johnson
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