



INVESTING IN CHILDREN

Membership Evaluation

Date November 2005

PROJECT NAME	Kids Kabin
PROJECT LOCATION	Church Walk Walker Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 3DL
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SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

Sector	Youth Provision
Ages	5-16 years
Area	East
Ward	Walker

Number of beneficiaries



investing in children

Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

Kids Kabin

The Kids Kabin in Walker evolved from very humble beginnings many years ago when the Sisters of Assumption came to live in Walker, they found children at their door. Children asking to help, asking to do stuff and perhaps just a little curious.

The Sisters then saw the need for something more, perhaps somewhere where creative activities would provide interest and enjoyment.

'Kids Kabin has been operating at the Church Walk Shopping Centre since July 1994. It aims to enhance the young people's sense of achievement and confidence through a broad variety of creative arts activities, and to provide enjoyable and educational projects'. (Taken from the website).

Kids Kabin is an service offering activities such as:

- Pottery
- Woodwork
- Drama
- Music
- Sewing
- Cooking
- Art - painting
 - drawing
 - glass work

in a purpose built venue in the heart of Walker.

The Kids Kabin is built around a quadrangle with all rooms opening out into this safe haven. A place where the children and young people can play, explore, be creative and learn. Artwork is on display everywhere; children and young people's creations are used as resources as well plants, flowers and vegetables growing in pots and boxes.

Last year the groups made a **'turf-roofed bar'**. They did this with 'wattle and daub'; please see Appendix 1 that clearly demonstrates how this was achieved.

Kids Kabin operates on a 'drop-in' basis but is only open to a certain amount of children and young people at any given time.

This is to allow the children and young people to have quality time in the areas they are working, giving space for each individual to use the resources, join in the activities and have time with the worker facilitating the sessions.

In order to achieve this, junior and senior sessions are run in slightly different ways.

Firstly, children and young people register with the Kids Kabin, giving details of home address and contact numbers.

Junior Sessions:

The junior sessions run four nights per week from 3.45pm-5.15pm. The children and young people turn up at the Kids Kabin and wait outside for the workers:

1. To tell them what activities are available

This is dependant on which workers are available. The workers employed on a part-time basis and work two sessions per week.

2. To sort out who can come in for that session

Due to demand only a certain amount of children and young people can be let in during the session. To make it fair for all, each individual has the opportunity to join in the activities at least once per week.

The Senior Session:

The way in which young people access these sessions has changed. The young people sign up for one evening per week. This means that the young people know that they will be able to have a session on a certain evening each week at the Kids Kabin.

This is all negotiated with the young people and if they want to change their night then they can.

When I visited Kids Kabin I met Chantelle, who said that 'the new system is better, you know when you can come in'.

Chantelle has been coming to the Kids Kabin for nearly three years. Her favourite session is 'cooking' but Chantelle also enjoys arts and drama, however on the evening of my visit Chantelle was making a bench, yes a bench! Ably assisted by other young people Bruce and Caspar in the woodwork room. On my second visit to talk about my report Chantelle made Lasagne. (From one extreme to the other.)

The young people were working in the woodwork area and in the pottery room, creating whatever they wanted.

The workers will also try and accommodate any other ideas that the children and young people have, a recent request resulted in an electronics activity being organised; an activity which was enjoyed by all of the group.

The programme is planned for up to ten weeks and the young people are involved in choosing what they want to do. This can change on a weekly basis now that the young people know which evening they are coming in. This is how the group decided to make lasagne this week.

Trips and Residentials

There are a range of summer activities and trips offered on a yearly basis including camping and residentials.

- Seahouses – two trips, summer and May Bank holiday

- Wooplaw Woods – two trips camping in Scotland.
- Bamburgh
- Druridge Bay
- Outward Bound activities
- Beamish/ Beadnell/ Seahouses, during the summer as well as supporting work in the park.

The children and young people are involved in the planning of the trips and residentials, for example:

- ***Menu planning – the group discuss what food they want to take on their trips.***
- ***Equipment lists***
- ***Games programme – the group plan and organise games and activities for their trips, as well as the game rules.***

Annual General Report:

All of the activities, residentials, creations, group work and project management are clearly highlighted in the Annual General Report. ***The children and young people were involved in designing the document, including choosing the photographs and designing the layout of some pages.***

Paper Jam – a five-minute film created, directed, filmed and acted by young people, then edited etc.

Please see Appendix 2 which highlights comments from one of the creators – James Arkless aged 13. Other young people involved included James Ferry, Melissa, Darren, Colin, and Chantelle.

The Children's Fund:

With the project having funding from The Children's Fund, young people from The Kids Kabin have recently become involved in wider discussions regarding 'Children's Voice'.

The young people attend meetings with other children and young people from projects with Children's Fund money to look at the wider aspects of being involved in dialogue about the local community. Issues that have been raised are around –

- *Keeping children and young people safe on the streets*
- *Addressing drugs and alcohol issues*
- *Looking at creating a media campaign ie. making posters to promote awareness.*

Children and young people are involved in dialogue and change within Kids Kabin and the children and young people are definitely listened to. The projects aims and objectives are quite prescriptive and the project is quite small which limits a flexible timetable. However this is recognised by the project management and they are challenged into looking deeper at how children and young people can participate in the project and the programme.

Rachel said *'When it was a little club it was boring, but now its bigger its better'.*

Natasha told me that she *'has been coming since I was 6, and I grew the biggest radish in Kids Kabin ever'.*

Robert and James were also around the evening I took my evaluation for them to read, they didn't want to add anything but alongside the other young people they agreed with what I had written.

Therefore in recognition of the way in which the Kids Kabin Team include children and young people in dialogue and change at this point in time I would like to recommend that on behalf of the of the children and young people who access The Kids Kabin that they do receive their Investing in Children membership.

Helen Mulhearn
Membership Co-ordinator
Investing in Children
November 2005

Drop in for sense of achievement

Walker's Kids' Kabin was set up by the Sisters of Assumption to provide interest, enjoyment and a sense of achievement for local children through creative and educational projects, such as pottery, woodwork, drama, music, sewing, cooking and art. It is funded by The Children's Fund.

Though Kids' Kabin is a drop-in centre, numbers using it at any one time are limited to ensure everyone has quality time and space to use the resources and spend time with the staff. All the Kabin's rooms open onto a central courtyard. This is a safe haven, a place where children and young people can play, explore, be creative and learn.

For the junior sessions, children wait outside the Kabin to find out what activities are available and who can come in for the session. Everyone gets at least one chance to join in each week.

“...you know when you can come in...”

For the senior sessions, young people negotiate to sign up for one evening a week, which they can change at a later date. They can choose what they want to do each week, which could be anything from making lasagne to building a bench. Chantelle prefers this method. “The new system is better – you know when you can come in.”

As well as the activities mentioned above, the workers try to accommodate any other ideas the children and young people have. A recent request resulted in an electronics activity, which was enjoyed by the whole group.

Each year there are summer activities and trips, including camping and residential trips, planned by the children and young people themselves. They discuss the food, equipment and games they will have, as well as game rules.

Kids' Kabin children and young people helped put together its annual report, choosing the photographs and designing some of the page layouts. Some of the young people attend meetings with others from other Children's Fund-supported projects, to look at the wider aspects of being involved in the local community, such as safety on the streets, drugs and alcohol.

“Kids' Kabin is small, which makes it difficult to have a flexible timetable,” says the Investing in Children assessor. “But the project managers recognise this, and look for ways children and young people can participate in the project and the programme.”

[suggested pics – layout from annual report, or people having fun in central courtyard]