

INVESTING IN CHILDREN

Membership Evaluation

Date March 2005

PROJECT NAME	West End Youth Enquiry Service – (WEYES)
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SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

WEYES is described as “hive of activity” providing fun, learning opportunities and support services to young people. It is a member of Investing in Children because of the constant dialogue and commitment to involving all young people in the service. Young people are encouraged to have their say, plan activities and lots of discussion between staff and young people as well as notice boards asking for ideas for summer activities, suggestion box, flipcharts in toilets for comments and suggestions and the Young People’s Forum which is where the young people meet to discuss their issues (their meeting, their agenda and their rules). Young people at WEYES also led the “Have your say” research where they researched health issues with over 293 of their peers and the Newcastle Health Partnership has taken up the findings. The atmosphere at WEYES encourages young people to make their voices heard in the daily life of the Service.

Sector	Youth Provision
Ages	All ages
Area	West
Ward	Westgate

Number of beneficiaries



investing in children

Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

WEYES – West End Youth Enquiry Service

When you walk into the West End Youth enquiry Service building you are hit with a vibrant mass of colour. A wall rainbowed with photographs, covered with information, and a happy cheerful glow from all the young people either hanging about, dropping in or doing 'a course.'

I use the word 'course' loosely to describe the range of fun activities, learning opportunities and groups that young people in the West End of Newcastle are offered and involved in at WEYES. (Please see attached leaflet)

Not only are these opportunities provided for young people but also they play a vital role in how courses are developed. Depending on what young people want to see happening is where the workers seek funding, working alongside the fixed support services that WEYES provide for the benefit of the young people they work with.

Evidence of Dialogue

The young people are encouraged to have a say, share their views and plan **their** activities. Notice boards are on the walls asking for suggestions for summer activities, workers are informal and chat with the young people in whatever session they are attending about what **they** want to do. Flip chart paper hangs on the toilet wall for comments and suggestions – very imaginative! There is also a suggestion box at the front door with jazzy paper to write on. (Please see attached sheet, one filled in comment sheet and one not.)

WEYES has also developed a Young People's Forum -YPF but, what does that mean? Different things to different people. Officially the YPF meet to discuss issues relevant and important to the young people, and that is exactly what happens, their meeting, their agenda, their rules and regulations (please see attached notes).

The girls I met with Anne Marie and Abbey laughed when they told me about their meetings, they knew they went, they knew they talked and did stuff and more importantly enjoyed many fun activities such as 'mountain biking in mud'.

I believe that the relaxed approach of the staff team and the ethos within the WEYES means that the young people are quite happy and comfortable in making their voice heard, making their feelings known and in general being part of the daily life of WEYES.

Some of the comments both Anne Marie and Abbey made during my visit were:-

'you can talk to staff'

'you can come here and have fun'

'they really do listen to us'

'the staff talk to us about what we want to do'

'it's much better than school, you don't get told what to do!'
'the YPF looks at what the young people want to do'

As well as:

'I know how to make pancakes! But we didn't flip them in the air in case they stuck to the ceiling'

'I enjoy coming'

'it's good you can get info on just about anything'

'basically you can come here to have fun and get to know people'

Anne Marie shared that she *'used to work in here cos I got bullied at school so the teachers brought me down here for lessons. That was my first contact. Now I come here straight from school, I get support for reading and writing and mentoring on a Friday.'*

Evidence of Change

Groups adapt and change depending on what the young people want to do and achieve. For example:-

BME – Girls Group

This group meets on a Sunday 1-3pm, the girls devised their own programme and then a smart info card was devised from that, please see attached.

Computer Courses

The young lads attending the computer course were not too keen on just the basics. Therefore a music package was found so that they can make music, be DJ's etc.

Decoration

Some of the colours in the house have been chosen by the young people e.g. the lilac kitchen.

Computers

The young people argued the case for two new computers at WEYES

The young people have been involved in numerous activities which have offered them great experiences and provided them with a fun way of learning:-

Steps to Health

The Steps to Health drop in sessions cover issues related to young peoples health as they see it. It covers many areas of young peoples health including personal hygiene, physical and mental health, safer sex, healthy eating etc.

The staff team also provides **outreach** and this is one of the courses that has proved very popular with young people at other youth clubs in and around the area.

Neutral Zone Event

An event where the young people visited the club in Newcastle to make and create non-alcoholic cocktails. As a result of this course a recipe booklet was designed.

Keyfund Bids

Both Anne Marie and Abbey were involved with the 'Go Girls' group in successfully receiving funding to go to King Lau's.

Have your Say

This was a 'Participation Appraisal' a huge event where the group received money from 'New Deal' to train young people as researchers. They researched over 293 young people on issues regarding health. All these issues have been taken on board by the Newcastle Health partnership.

WEYES is a hive of activity and I hope my evaluation reflects this and gives you some idea of how busy it is. Busy working with young people and providing a safe environment for young people in the West End of Newcastle to participate in what happens for them.

Their drop in sessions provide a range of services that may be useful to all the young people in the area. To achieve what they need to WEYES also works with many other professionals from a range of service providers throughout Newcastle. On my second visit a group were in cooking with two workers from Community Nutrition based at the RVI. The young people were from a neighboring project that was using the kitchen facilities. I think the young people had more fun cooking their food than actually eating it but they all enjoyed the session as they got to use other facilities at WEYES, such as the Internet.

Therefore on behalf of the young people who use WEYES I have no hesitation in recommending that they do receive their Investing in Children membership, especially for their constant dialogue and commitment to involving all young people in the service provision.

Helen Mulhearn

Project Worker Investing in Children

March 2005

Saying yes to WEYES

The West End Youth Enquiry Service provides a range of fun activities, learning opportunities and groups for young people in Newcastle's West End. The young people play a vital role in how the project's programme is developed and what funding is sought.

They are encouraged to have a say, share their views and plan their activities. Notice boards on the walls ask for suggestions for activities, and workers chat informally with the young people about what they want to do. Flip chart paper even hangs on the toilet wall for comments and suggestions, and there is a suggestion box at the front door with jazzy paper to write on.

WEYES has a Young People's Forum (YPF), which meets to discuss issues relevant and important to the young people – it is their meeting, with their agenda, rules and regulations.

“...you don't get told what to do...”

Groups adapt and change depending on what the young people want to do and achieve. For example, the BME girls group devised its own programme and smart info card. The boys attending the computer course wanted more than just the basics, and a music package was installed so they can make music and be DJs.

After WEYES trained some young people as researchers, they canvassed nearly 300 others on health issues, and their findings were taken on board by the Newcastle Health Partnership.

“The relaxed approach of the staff team and the ethos in WEYES means that the young people are quite happy and comfortable in making their voices heard, making their feelings known and in general being part of the daily life of WEYES,” says the Investing in Children assessor.

“They really do listen to us,” adds one of the young people. “It's much better than school, you don't get told what to do!”

[suggested pics – jazzy paper for suggestion box, or flip chart paper in the loo]