



investing in children

Re-evaluation for Investing in Children membership

DISC Young Carers

For the purpose of this re-evaluation I met with Michael, Naomi, Steff, Kristy, Simon, Joanne, Rebecca and Ian

DISC Young Carers continues to provide many opportunities for young people to engage with staff and talk about what they want to do whilst accessing the project. The project continues to offer a drop in session and has provided additional activities and projects at different times of the year based on the ideas of young people. They also continue to provide one to one support.

Opportunities for dialogue and change

Young People's Room.

The idea to develop the young people's rooms was discussed with young people and staff. Young people explained that they wanted to create a space where they could come and relax and meet with other young people and staff from the project.

Kristy told me, **"We all came together to chat about our ideas and how we wanted the room to look"**

Rebecca added, **"We wanted somewhere to just chill out with our friends"**

Young people were informed of various funding sources by staff, to develop their ideas. Different young people then came up with ideas for furniture and colours for the walls, all these ideas have now been put into place.

Group Planning and Evaluation Session.

The group I met with spoke positively about the process of evaluation that DISC Young Carers use, and how it is structured to allow the young people to give their own important views and plan what they want to do. Staff, positively encourage young people to evaluate activities and projects. The feedback is then used to develop activities and trips that young people want.

Michael explained, **"You just ask Rachel what you want to do and she writes down everything you say"** All the young people have the option to do this if they want.

Ian told me, **"We do this every time we meet"**.

Naomi added, **"We always get listened to and decide as a group what we want do"**.

This environment the young people spoke about gives them the opportunity to be open and honest when giving feedback on how good the sessions have been. This also allows the sessions to be open to changes that sometimes occur through the direct input from young people.

Activities

Activities that take place at the project are decided on by young people. Activities that have taken place are, horse riding, residentials, swimming and archery. Some young people are planning a trip to Southampton to attend a Young Carers conference.

Kristy told me about the conference, she explained **“We approached the staff about being able to attend the conference because I thought it would be good to go”**.

Young Carers DVD

Some young people at the project wanted to raise awareness about being young carers. Michael told me about the ideas young people came up with, **“We wanted to film a day in the life of a young carer and wrote down all our ideas about how we would do this”**. The film has been developed and young people are now meeting with staff to look at how it can be used to raise awareness.

Ian added, **“It has been used in some schools and it would be good if it could be used in more schools”**. This might be something that young people and staff could discuss further.

Drop In

This continues to provide many opportunities for young people who attend these sessions to chat with staff about what they want to do.

Rebecca told me about the drop in, **“It helps young carers, and the staff give you support with stuff you talk about”**.

Rebecca went on to tell me **“It gives you support and time to chill out”**.

Steff told me **“If you talk to a member of staff about different things, they listen to you and help you with your ideas”**,

Bishop Auckland

Future developments include supporting some young carers who attend Bishop Auckland College to develop a service at the college. The young people are also aiming to organise a conference to raise awareness about being young carers for adults in education, health and other services.

DISC Young Carers is certainly built on the principle that young carers have the right to be heard and listened to, and that they have a right to information and advice on issues concerning them. I look forward to seeing further developments made by young people and staff next year.

I would like to thank everyone who helped me to write this evaluation. When I asked the young people if they agreed that DISC Young Carers project should get Investing in Children membership they all said yes! Therefore, I have no hesitation in recommending that the Young Carers project continues to be an Investing in Children member. Well Done.

Rob Johnson
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