



Evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Sacrison and District Detached Project

Sacrison and District Detached youth project, covers three very different areas; including Sacrison, Langley Park and Lanchester. The project operates both detached sessions and project work in all areas. The targeted age range is 13 to 19.

The main focus of the project is detached youth work. This acts as a mechanism to meet with young people and build relationships and to then develop activities and programmes of personal, social development. These planned programmes are then introduced during sessions specifically designed for project work and are based on the ideas initially developed by young people.

The project is currently undergoing a transitional period inevitably leading to numerous changes, changes which have led to new members of staff and a new project base.

The project has now based in Fyndoune Community College in Sacrison, presenting workers with an opportunity to create links with teachers and to develop the project's role within the school.

Evidence of dialogue and change: is taken from meetings with Watty, Mirelle, Ameer, Jason Craig, Martin, Scott, John, Craig, Natalie, Liam, Charlotte and Kirsten.

A group of young men supported by project trainee Martin ran a DJing project which culminated in a rave which was called 'Intensity.'

Martin is currently doing the Level 1 course in youth work. He is planning future sessions with other young people. **"Its quite hard, because they are all my mates, but they are OK with me, I don't just decide what we are doing, I ask them and let them make the decision"**

During the initial stages of the project the group met at the Sage in Gateshead and decided upon the records they wanted to use; **"We went to Newcastle and bought the records that we wanted, it was class"**.

The rave planning group started after the workers met the young people via detached sessions and the group asked if they could have a rave. The workers responded: **"if you want but you organise it"**. The group met every Friday evening. They applied to the Youth Opportunity fund to complete 6 weeks of DJ training and put on the event; they were successful in their bid and secured £670.00 for training and £3000.00 for records.

The group organised all advertising material, venue, security etc. The rave was held at the local working men's club. **"We decided to charge £2.00 per ticket which we have put to one side to help them fund another event."** One of the big decisions the group made was to decide what age range they would open the event out to. It was decided that they would focus the event on young people aged 13-17 years old. **"I hated the meetings at first, but once we listened to each other we managed to make a lot of decisions."** **"We put our views across but don't always get our own way, if every one doesn't agree we don't do it like having the pro DJ's at the event."**

The young people asked if they could receive a certificate for all the work they had put in to organising the DJing project. Project workers suggested the **ASDAN** course. The group are currently finishing their files.

Work has begun planning the next event **“we are going to do it at Christmas instead of Halloween as we haven’t got enough time to plan, it takes ages.”**

The planning group is extremely keen for the event to happen again, they are donating £500.00 from their keyfund application to the fund for the next event.

The project is aiming to run a sexual health, advice and information drop-in from the school as well as operating the c-card on a detached basis. This need was highlighted by the young people as they feel they can not talk confidentially to a worker whilst on the street. **“We asked Louise to get the c-card and she did, we said that we wanted Chlamydia testing and we have, it was too far to keep having to go to Durham.”**
“We can see a worker when we need to, its better now that it’s during school or after on the streets, it’s up to us”

During a session at Langley Park community centre I met with a group of young people who were very enthusiastic about the way they had been included in the way the project is run. They have taken part in numerous activities including a team building survival weekend, trip to London and Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition. All of which they planned themselves **“if we want to do something we have to plan it and organise it ourselves”**

I asked the group if they felt listened to; in response I received a barrage of passionate answers. Charlotte informed me that **“We have a say on what we do”**. It is clear that the young people who use the project have a clear understanding that the project is theirs and that they have ownership over their achievements **If we want to get anything done, we need to all work together when we go away on residential we make rotas so its fair on everyone, we all sit down together and talk about who’s doing what”**

All the children and young people who I spoke to were happy with the service that Sacriston and District detached offers; however they would like to work on a few changes which they recommend they work on with Louise and the staff team over the next year;

- **Set up the Young Persons Management Committee to help make decisions about how the project is run, including giving the project a better name, Sacriston and district detached is rubbish.**
- **Do more around the school**
- **More sessions on the street; one night a week in each area is not enough**
- **We all live in separate areas, its really hard for us to get together. If the workers sorted a meeting out and sent us letters we would all know about it and could meet up with them, rather than missing out.**
- **Let us know what other groups are up to. A project newsletter or text messages to give us update, the new young persons management committee could work on it.**

Sacriston and District Detached Project is very busy meeting young people in their community and on their terms. The project operates within the core principles of not just detached youth work but also the principles of Investing in Children ‘Changing my life where I live’. **“The workers help us; they don’t do it for us”**.

It is evident from the sessions I attended and from speaking to the young people, that project staff continually engage in dialogue with young people where they live their life and as a result of this process implement changes to their service.

All the young people I met with were very positive about the project. They feel that they have the opportunity to participate in the direction of the project and are listened to by staff.

The young people involved in this report agree with the content and recommendations made. Therefore it is on their behalf that I have no hesitation in recommending that Sacriston and District Detached project becomes as Investing in Children member.

Kim Kyle
Investing in Children
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