



Re-evaluation for Investing in Children membership

“Them Wifies”

For the purpose of this re-evaluation, I met with: Lisa, Sally Jo, Cheryl Jo, Carol, Robin and Kelly.

The girls explained to me that they come here every Thursday and participate in things like drama and the arts. It's obviously something that they really enjoy from the enthusiasm that they had to tell me about everything they have been doing over the past year.

They initially met each other during the Easter school for Theatre Pie (Pie stands for Participation, Inclusion and Empowerment) and everyone got along really well, they then got back together for the summer school (Theatre Pie) and after that they all became members. The girls were keen to explain how well they all got along and how they are all great friends and have started to do things together outside of “Them Wifies”.

Evidence of dialogue with children and young people:

- **Launched DnA**
The girls were involved in doing a piece of drama for the launch of the DnA (Drug and Alcohol service for children and young people in Newcastle).
The girls explained that they were asked by the adults to do this performance however they were involved in the script and images, basically from the planning process.
- **C Card scheme**
The group were also involved in the C card launch. Again they were happy with their level of involvement and felt that they were included in the planning and delivery. For this specific project, they did a performance around teenage pregnancy and everyone said they really enjoyed it.
- **Every 3-4 nights a pie night is arranged.** This is where everyone goes on the Karaoke machine and they order in a take away. Bev and Maria interview everyone to see if they are happy with the project and if there is anything they would like to see happen/change. All of the interviews are confidential.
- **The young people asked for some decks so they could use them during session times and also performances – they have now received them.** They have also just got 2 new computers so they can be used during sessions for research and also homework.
- **As requested, they have now created a rota for washing up, photocopying, filing, making toast, tidying up and putting away the props.** Everyone agrees with the rota and thinks that it is fair because it means that everyone gets a fair go and doing things.

- There is now a signing in register for when people first arrive. This is to monitor how often the children and young people are using it because there is now a waiting list of people wanting to join, so if someone hasn't been coming for a while, their place can be given to someone else. Again, everyone said that they agreed with this process and think it is fair.

Comments made by children and young people:

“No one is ever excluded because everyone always makes sure that everyone is involved”

“When I first came I was nervous, but since I have been coming every week it has really boosted my confidence and it has also given me the opportunity to meet new people and make new friends”.

“I really enjoy doing all the different performances”

“Everything is going really well since I have started coming here. I didn't think I would, but I have now started to learn things from the different performances that we are involved with. For example: I have learnt from the DnA launch, that young people may have underlying problems that make them turn to drugs and they aren't simply doing it for attention”.

Recommendations by children and young people:

- Something that nearly everyone mentioned is that they would like to do a really big performance with everyone involved. One young woman mentioned that usually they only perform to each other and it would be really good to do it to a full audience.
- Bigger performing and practice space because it gets packed!
- Have more frequent sessions more times a week – the plan is to have it on a Wednesday night now as well.

This report clearly shows that the young people have been at the heart of this project and they have been involved in some brilliant work over the past year. I have no hesitation in recommending them for Investing in Children membership and look forward to seeing what you achieve in this coming year!!

All of the children and young people I have spoken to have agreed this report and the recommendations.

Ashleigh Greathead
Investing in Children
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