

Eighteen And Under Update: April & May 2011

April

The Easter holidays interrupted our abuse prevention work in the schools but the schools being off led to many more requests for support. The Drop-In service was extremely busy with many young people in crisis, the phones rang off the hook and we dealt with hundreds of e-mails and texts.

Increasingly young survivors from across the UK are accessing the support and information service as there are so few confidential support services for younger abuse survivors. We dealt with 3 serious child protection cases and one of these was passed onto Manchester police. Their response was excellent and swift.

Over April, we provided Violence Is Preventable programmes in 2 primary school and 2 High schools reaching a total of 191 children and 12 teachers. An additional 118 young people and 8 teachers received input from us on prevention of sexual exploitation, gendered violence and equality issues.

The Resolve-It project worked intensively with 30 children and 2 teachers over April. The Resolve-It project provides more in depth and focused sessions for children and young people who are at high risk of school exclusion.

In April, six promotional and awareness sessions about violence prevention were delivered across Angus, Fife and Perthshire to teachers, youth leaders and other professionals.

May

The month of May was awesome. We were so busy that we had only a skeleton crew staffing the Centre to deal with the many drop-ins and phone calls. Due to the high number of young people using the drop-in services, we had to call on all our volunteers to give more time. Thankfully they did come in and assist!

During the month of May we worked in 18 schools across Scotland providing Violence Is Preventable sessions to children and young people. The age range of the young people involved was age 3 to 17 and we worked with a total of 2,065 and 102 teachers. In addition, we provided V.I.P. sessions to a girl guide group of 25 girls. There

were another 2 V.I.P. presentations to teachers in Perthshire and Angus, which will no doubt increase the take up of schools involved in the V.I.P. programme.

Due to the high demand for the programmes, we are actively trying to encourage teachers and youth leaders to take up the V.I.P. accredited training so that they can deliver the prevention programmes themselves. Many teachers and schools are expressing an interest in this but due to cutbacks are struggling to free up the teachers time. Hopefully this will be resolved.

The newly designed Jenni's Storybook is almost ready. Jenny's Story was one of the first V.I.P. resources ever produced. It was first written and illustrated in 1997 and has been one of the most effective abuse prevention resources for use with children under 8 years old. We decided to modernise it to make it more appealing to today's children. It has been rewritten and newly illustrated. It has also been translated into German, French, Spanish, Polish and Italian. All this has been done through volunteers and at no cost to the organisation. Jenni's Story will be made available soon as a free download from the website. Look for it at www.violenceispreventable.org.uk

We had some good publicity over both months with the press constantly contacting us for comments on several stories. We were on the radio and in the newspapers on several occasions. As ever, we continued to take the opportunity to comment on most things of relevance to us.

Our Shadow Management group is currently reforming. The Shadow Management consists of young people some of whom are service users. Shadow Management works alongside the management committee to steer the organisation, plan the future and make decisions about finance, employment and any other issues.

Our volunteers have stepped up to the mark to cover some of the gaps caused by the increasing demand for services. We provided further training sessions for them to increase their skills and confidence but annoyingly several volunteers found paid employment this month.

Our quest for quality partnerships both in this country and abroad continues. We now have a range of partners with whom we are

sharing ideas, resources and good practice. Our newest partner is in Pakistan and they are very keen to get involved with the V.I.P. delivery and research.

The Kirkton Beat children's samba band has performed at a wrestling gig where they were totally awesome. A lot of new members joined the band probably due to seeing their public performances. Our youngest member is only 4 years old.

There have been a lot of requests for the band to play at gala days and other events but we have had to turn many of these down due to a lack of transport for the children and the drums. While we do not charge anything for playing at events, neither can it cost us anything to perform. This means that anyone wanting the band to play has to either pay for the transport for us or, preferably, provide it. Anyone interested in knowing more about the Kirkton Beat can phone us on 01382 206222 or contact Kirkton Community Centre in Dundee.

Sadly, in May we lost 2 workers. One chose to leave us, hopefully for a better future and the other we lost due to the end of a projects funding. We wish both workers well and appreciate all their efforts. We will miss them greatly. This takes us down to 5 full-time workers and 1 part-time worker to cover the same workload.

Eighteen And Under

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