

Maypole Youth Centre

Brief Description

The Maypole Centre is a Birmingham City Council Youth Service Project based in a poor neighbourhood on the Southern edge of the City. We work with young people from the Maypole area in a variety of planned and structured ways. We aim to reach 60% of young people in the 13 to 16 age range and actively engage them in activities during this period. We do this by using our 'Curriculum for Adolescence' as a framework for activities. The activities are designed to deliver the 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters. Activities are structured to term long programmes most ending with a residential activity. At any time we provide direct support to 40 young people aged 16 to 25 providing Floating Support to help them live independently. Our aim is to indicate to others the value of and outcomes produced by high quality interventions

Funding

Direct income from Birmingham Youth Service is £125k although the annual turnover of the centre overall is £450k. This additional sum is made up of direct contracts with Connexions, Supporting People (a direct Youth Service contract with Birmingham City Council), Department of Health, income generation through sale of services and a range of smaller grants including Comic Relief work to fund alcohol interventions.

Staffing

Project Director and two full-time Youth Workers plus full-time Administrative Officer and part-time youth workers. Connexions Youth Service Personal Adviser, Tenancy Advice Support Service (TASS). Full-time Project Co-coordinator; 3 full-time TASS Key Workers, Full-time Alcohol Support Worker seconded from Aquarius and funded by Comic Relief, Full-time Children's Service Manager for under-11s work.



Nature of provision

Which groups of young people does the project work with?

We work with over 200 different young people each week and over 800 different young people in a year from our neighbourhood. Maypole is on a poor outer ring neighbourhood with high levels of deprivation.

What are the main health approaches used and activities offered.

Video shorts explaining our work can be found on the home page of our web site www.maypolecentre.co.uk

Being healthy is important for our work with young people. Each term up to 36 young people follow programmes in sexual health and substance misuse education. These programmes have been featured in both local and national reviews and are cited as examples of good practice for Birmingham Youth Service. We also provide confidential condom distribution and smoking cessation classes. We work with South Birmingham PCT and Birmingham Women's Hospital to provide local accessible regular contact for young mums to be to gain regular pre-natal support.

We use adventure activities to encourage young people to experience new challenges. Over the past 5 years 70 young people have sailed the English Channel. Each spring a group undertake

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gorge walking, cycling and climbing in Wales. The centre owns a 70 foot narrowboat which sleeps 12 and a fleet of mountain bikes.

If young people need a job, have trouble at school or want a training course then they come to the Maypole Centre. We have the highest number of contacts of all of the Connexions Centres in the city. Our Connexions Personal Adviser and Youth Workers will help.

Our young people are creative. The Urban Arts programmes at Maypole produce some of the finest tracks, dancers and film-makers. The centre is equipped with digital recording studio facilities, a dance studio and a range of digital video recorders.

Some young people are particularly vulnerable. Two schemes target young people at risk. The Innov8 programme targeted 30 young people a year aged 13 to 15 to engage them for 10 hours a week. This project was a pilot for the Department of Health's Young People's development Programme (YPDP). This has now been replaced by the Youth Work 4 Health project which seeks to identify standards for healthy youth work. We are the only Youth Service outlet with a contract to deliver 'Supporting People Services' to young people aged 16 to 25 at risk of not maintaining their tenancies. We support 40 young people at any time.

How are young people involved in shaping the project?

Our structured curriculum approach was researched and trialled by young people to develop effective ways of improving their life chances. We constantly review the effectiveness of our work and involve young workers in the delivery of services. Young people are involved in researching many of the local issues and presenting solutions to other local agencies. Our young people are on the local YOF committee and sit nationally on the group involved in the Youth Capital Challenge competition. On a national level we have been involved in the



'Cutting the Cake' consultation and young people from Maypole were responsible for the final presentation to Gordon Brown and other ministers. Young People are employed in the service delivery.

How does the project respond to the needs of different young people, particularly the most marginalised?

In a poor neighbourhood, accessible services work most effectively for marginalized young people with identifiable local service delivery staff. Workers advocate for young people in dealing with a wide range of services including; Social Services, after-care, Education, mental health and criminal justice often enabling these targeted services to work more effectively with young people. This includes young people who individually seek our help and do not enrol on our main programmes, and those who access targeted services.

Outcomes

How do young people benefit from their involvement in the project?

Evaluation indicates increased attendance at school, engagement in Further Education, positive transitions and destinations. Not only are young people's horizons expanded through a wide range of challenging activities but the social capital of young people and the community is built on and developed by the structured curriculum approach. Volunteering opportunities means that young people are more firmly integrated into their community.

How do others (other groups of young people, organisations or the wider community) benefit from the project?

We have recently carried out a reputation management exercise

which indicated the value of our service to other agencies in terms of sustained tenancies, improved relationships, reductions in anti-social behaviour, and decreased levels of debt.

Does the project contribute to local health priorities? Which ones, and how?

- Improving physical health through sports and recreational activities
- Delivering a broad range of healthy activities and providing health information, advice and guidance
- Reducing teenage pregnancies, improving sexual health knowledge and working with young parents.
- Providing drug and alcohol education and information programmes.

How are young people's progress and achievements captured/ measured and recorded?

Young people's attendance and activity are recorded on 3 management information systems; YouthZone for the youth service, Insight for Connexions, and SARs for Supporting People. All recorded outcomes and accreditations are logged. Assessment tools similar to the APIR (assessment, planning, implementation and review) framework are used to chart perceived progress over time. All young people with complex needs gain support through regular one-to-one interviews.

Measuring effectiveness

How is the project's work assessed or evaluated?

Comprehensive Management Information Systems for Supporting People, Birmingham Youth Service and Connexions provide evidence of project performance profile usage and hours of attendance. Individual progress is captured through these databases evidencing accreditations, recorded outcomes and detail of interventions and destinations. We manage our website to showcase the quality of our work.

Our sexual health work with young women has been externally evaluated

through ESRC (www.maypolecentre.co.uk/TSH/index.html) which found a substantial impact on sexual health behaviours of participants in programmes. Initial evaluation by London University's SSRU team of the Innov8 YDP found a strong positive effect on the behaviour of participants.

What factors help the delivery of healthy youth work?

The centre was completely refurbished in 2002 and is fit for purpose to deliver high quality youth work interventions. The delivery of healthy youth work is further aided by the level of funding we receive to deliver our curriculum. Staff are well trained and experienced.

Partnership/ multidisciplinary working

What other agencies do you work with on a regular basis?

A large staff team is made up of Youth Workers, Connexions PA, Substance Misuse Counsellor, Housing Support Key Workers. On a regular basis the team works with schools, targeted services such as after-care, YOTs, housing providers, the Police, health and social care services.





When working in partnership, what is the distinctive contribution of your organisation/ project?

Being a local project, Maypole often helps other agencies engage effectively with young people. We are able to deliver services to and maintain engagement with young people who would under other circumstances be 'hard to reach'.

Has this partnership resulted in greater collaboration or increased understanding between partners?

We believe this is true of all of the services identified in the last section, and evidenced in exercises like the Reputation Management survey.

Strategic impact

Do you consider this project to be innovative, in terms of healthy youth work?

The project is innovative in that it evidences how youth work interventions in a poor neighbourhood can improve general health outcomes for young people. It provides an excellent model for how targeted services can be delivered in a universal setting.

How do you disseminate the learning from the project?

Maypole has received substantial local and national publicity; these articles can be found on: www.maypolecentre.co.uk/articles/index.html

All funding bids, work plans, session plans and project reviews can be accessed freely from our the Maypole centre website (see below)

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