Listening Before Commissioning Young People’s Views On Health Improvement In East Sussex

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Guide

• Setting the context for engagement with young people (DB)
• What we did, what we found, and what to do next (NS)
• Taking things forward (DB)
Context for engagement
Benefits of young people’s participation

• **Co-production leads to better services** – driven by feedback from people who know and use them.
• Not wasting money on services that do not work - children and young people know what works and what doesn’t.
• Making the process and services child and young person friendly and accessible.
• Gaining expertise from children or young people and learning from the local knowledge they may have about diverse needs and the barriers faced
• Improved **accountability** to children and young people as stakeholders and citizens.
• Direct benefits to children and young people themselves – including increased knowledge of services, confidence, skills and networks as they work with commissioners, service providers and others.
• Empowerment – giving children and young people a voice.
Aim
To provide greater understanding of the views and experiences of young people in East Sussex so that more person-centred and effective health improvement initiatives can be prioritised, and commissioned/delivered, in the context of limited resources.
What we did, what we found, and what to do
What we did

- **109 young people (11-19yrs)** took part
  - 97 in interactive focus groups;
  - 8 in developing recommendations;
  - 4 in the steering group
- **Sites**: academies, youth centres, and community schools/colleges
- Focused on **three** topics/areas...
What we did: WSA

We asked young people about:

• Health topics, issues, and initiatives in-and-out of school

• The School Health Service (school nurse)

• Ideas for what works and what doesn’t in health initiatives

• Ideas for new initiatives in school to improve their health;

• Interest in participating to design and co-deliver initiatives.
What we found: WSA

Young people told us that:

• More attention to health in school, having a voice;

• Many young people don’t know about their school nurse, where to find them or what they offer;

• More opportunities to find out about, take control of, contribute to, and feedback on, health improvement initiatives.

“I don’t think that they give us enough detail... one lesson a week is not enough to go in depth about the [health] subjects that you’re learning about”

WSA requires action regarding:
1) A formal health curriculum;
2) Ethos and environment;
3) Engagement with families and communities
What we did: EWR

We asked young people about:

• Awareness of resilience as a concept

• What helps/hinder young people to cope, prevent stress and overcome difficult times?

• What do schools do to help young people to be resilient?

• What would coping better, being less stressed or overcoming difficult times look like? How would it be described by young people?
What we found: EWR

Young people told us that:

- Not familiar with the term ‘resilience’ or why it’s useful to know;
- Some young people use strategies to achieve resilience in and out of school;
- There are lots of ways that schools could help support resilience in young people, e.g. providing relaxation or ‘time-out’ spaces, opportunities for different physical activities, and peer support systems such as buddying or mentoring.

“…we do stuff here like art… I take that home and if I’m feeling upset, then I’ll do some drawing or some painting or just write down how I feel and that helps quite a lot if I’m feeling stressed. Or like doing exercise and stuff like that”
What we did: SH

We asked young people about:

- Sex and relationships education (SRE) including ‘Safe Around Sex’ programme
- The C-Card and awareness of sexual health campaigns
- Sources of information on sexual health and experiences relating to this. What works and what doesn't?
- What could be done better and what would help most?
- How would young people describe positive sexual health and relationship outcomes?
What we found: SH

Young people told us that:

- More ‘teachers’ with specialist knowledge or skills, more opportunities for in-depth discussion, and more strategies on how to take control of and improve their sexual health;

- **Safe Around Sex** programme is valued

- Aware of C-Card but not always clear on how to get one and can be embarrassing

- No young person in this project had heard of any sexual health campaign aimed at young people.

“Some of the teachers we had were very awkward how they taught it [Sex and Relationships Education] because they didn’t really want to teach it but they had no choice.”
What to do
What to do

• Re-thinking health
• Giving young people a voice
• Ownership, responsibility, health-for-all, empowerment
• External specialist knowledge (e.g. SRE) bringing in community specialists
• Health as ‘everyone’s business’ – e.g. health promotion school council
Re-thinking health in school

- Living conditions
- Lifestyle
- Actions
- Physical environment
- Social, mental environment
- Pupils’ empowerment
- Pupils’ action competence
- Health Education: pupil-oriented, action-oriented
- Teachers’ professional skills competencies
- Collaboration at the school
- Collaboration between school and community

Meaningful participation

- Community
- Staff
- School Health Service
- Health Promotion
- Pupils
- Governors
- Parent reps
Taking things forward
Taking things forward

• Dissemination of the report findings and recommendations
• Working with partners to consider how the findings relate to their work with young people
• Embedding these approaches in service planning and delivery
Taking things forward

Current health improvement programmes

• A tiered programme of support for schools to facilitate the delivery of high quality PSHE education

• A pilot ‘social norms’ programme in schools which gathers the current behaviours, attitudes and perceptions of young people in relation to lifestyle/risky behaviours and then responds through a range of tailored intervention activities aimed at challenging misconceptions

• A pilot enhancement of the School Health Service which will support an acceleration of work with targeted schools to develop school health profiles and health improvement action plans using a whole-school approach

• Targeted relationships and sex education support for schools
Taking things forward

Future developments

• Further scoping of a pilot resilience programme in schools

• Further support to develop whole-school approaches to relationships and sex education

• Activity to raise awareness of sexual health & wellbeing and related services among young people and those who work with young people
Questions?
Further information

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