

Northampton Borough Council - Northampton Youth Forum

Wednesday, 28 May 2014

Present: Charlie (Chair, NSB), Emily (Chair, NSG), Sami (NSG), Cameron (NSB)*, Annie (Weston Favell Academy), Monica (NSG), Alice (NBC), Vicki (NBC), Anna (Cllr, NBC), Morcea, Matt (Lowdown), Katie (Service Six)

*Took minutes

1. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES (10:15)

Apologies were received from Craig (Northampton Academy), Billie (Northampton Academy), Paige (Abbeyfield) and Eisha (Kingsthorpe).

2. YOUNG PEOPLES' EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH - SURVEY RESULTS (10:30-11:00)

Survey results were circulated and discussed.

It was noted that a large proportion of those who completed the survey are female. Matt said that at the Lowdown, generally more females are seen through the counselling service than males. This was a point of interest that the forum would like to pick up through their work.

It was discussed *who* would be the best person for someone to talk to. This would be down to personal feeling and preference; however factors to consider for this include the age of the person and their gender in relation to how comfortable someone may be discussing their mental health with. It was suggested that some people may prefer to speak to professionals via a "stepping stone": speaking to someone that they can relate to for low level support before a professional's input is required. Furthermore, the forum discussed that young people may be more comfortable with people that they don't associate with so they don't have to see the person over and over again – such as a form tutor, who you have to see every day.

3. EMOTIONAL WELLBEING PROJECT - DISCUSSION OF IDEAS (11:00-12:00)

The forum discussed how we could take forward the survey results in terms of shaping activity. 65.91% of respondents want to access information about emotional wellbeing and mental health via social media, and 72.73% of respondents want to access this through a website. Both Katie from Service Six and Matt from the Lowdown said that their services have both social media and websites, however it was felt that social media is underutilised. Youth Forum attendees discussed ways to improve the information and support available via social media, and will look at having more targeted social media approaches.

As social media pages are already set up by organisations, youth forum members would like to instead develop something that promotes the services already out there. Matt (Lowdown), explained that this is what Ask Normen is acting as, a central place for information to be accessed. Alice, Vicki and Anna have a meeting

with Ask Normen next month, so will be able to find out more about their service for the forum.

Different platforms were discussed, such as a texting service, webpage, blog or twitter feed – “To put a smile on your face”, or “reasons to be happy today”. This would have a focus on the good, not the bad, promoting happiness and positivity but also where to go or who to speak to if you’re not feeling so great.

LUNCH 12:00-13:00

5. NHFT - EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH TALK (13:00-14:00)

Vic and Jackie, from the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service, spoke to the forum regarding their service. CAMHS is a countywide service that provides support to young people with moderate-severe mental health difficulties who are in need of specialist care.

There are four levels of support that can be accessed by those in need, depending on their circumstances:

1. Universal services:
 - Including GP’s, children centres, Connexions, youth workers, schools, school nurses, and other voluntary and community sector organisations.
2. Targeted services:
 - A Common Assessment Framework is put in place, where various agencies work to support a young person who may be vulnerable or in need. This works like a team around the family and schools usually take the lead with this.
3. Specialist services:
 - CAMHS Community teams, working together with Targeted Services, for young people who have moderate to severe mental health difficulties
4. High specialist services:
 - In-Patient Unit (13-18 years), crisis intervention and home treatment, for young people with severe mental health difficulties.

This tier system is fluid - purpose of the tier system is to get young people back down to universal service support as soon as possible, and as soon as they are feeling better. CAMHS has seen a great increase in referrals to this tier system.

Only a small percentage of people that access these tiers for support would need medication, most go through talking therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, workshops, parallel groups etc. Most people who go to CAMHS can become healthy again and recover.

More females access the service, however this divide has reduced and more males are now accessing services. There has also been an increase in young people with

disabilities and from BME groups accessing these services.

Jackie and Vic went through some advice for improving mental health and emotional wellbeing:

- Doing 30 mins – 1 hour of exercise every day
- Eating 3 balanced meals a day
- Turning off phones and tablets an hour and a half before bed – leads to over stimulation and takes away melatonin from the brain!
- Don't panic in exams – the anxiety that exams bring is natural and normal.
- Look forward to something every day
- Relax – relaxation and mindfulness are very simple things that make you feel good – there are apps for this for smart phones.

6. DEVELOPING PROJECT IDEAS - UPDATE ACTION PLANS (14:00-15:00)

See attached action plans for updates

The meeting concluded at 3:00pm