

The Cupboard

Project Details

South Leeds Health for All (SLHFA) is a community development organisation working in partnership with communities in South Leeds to improve health and enhance people's lives. The organisation was established in 1991 to work alongside these communities, enabling them to identify health needs and take action to meet them. The organisation has a strong track record working with a wide range of people from babies to the elderly. The Cupboard is SLHFA's Youthwork strand, which aims to improve the health and well-being of young people, aged 13 to 19, within South Leeds

Funding

The project runs on approximately £200,000 per year.

Key Funders

- Leeds Primary Care Trust – Core costs and Coordinator post
- Department of Health – Youth Work 4 Health project
- Connexions – Personal Adviser post
- Leeds Youth Service – Detached work within priority areas
- Pfizer – 'Life & Everything' – Group work programme

Staff Team

- Project Co-ordinator
- 2 full-time Young People's Development Workers
- 2 part time Young People's Support Workers
- 1 full-time equivalent Personal Adviser
- Sessional workers & volunteers



Nature of Provision

Target Groups

The project targets local vulnerable young people, who are not involved in mainstream youth provision in South Leeds. The following are priority target groups:

- Young people from traveller families
- Young people who have recently settled in the country
- Young people with learning disabilities
- Young people excluded or at risk of exclusion from school
- Young people who witness domestic violence
- Young parents and young women at risk of pregnancy
- Young people who are looked after and leaving care
- Young people not in Education, Employment or Training

How was the need for the project identified, and by whom?

The Cupboard Project was set up in 1999 by a partnership of agencies working in the Leeds 10 area, including a health visitor, a school nurse, youth workers and a primary care sexual health development officer. A need to reduce teenage pregnancies in the area was identified, in line with The Health of the Nation strategy which named sexual health as one of the five key issues to address. Consultation with young people and other workers highlighted the need to develop a project, which had a holistic approach rather than just focusing on sexual health.

The Cupboard

How do young people become involved? What, if any, commitment do you ask for?

Youth workers contact young people through outreach and detached work. Young people are also referred to the project through; self-referral; parents; social services; 0-16 Team; School mentors; and various other agencies. Their involvement is on a voluntary basis and is long-term, so the project does not ask for any formal commitment. Young people choose to stay involved as they develop a sense of belonging and ownership within the project.

"It's like being part of a family who get on" (young man, aged 14).

The Cupboard Project offers:

1-2-1 Support – Practical and emotional support on a one to one basis. This ranges from a one off chat to ongoing support.

Groupwork – A range of small targeted groups in response to young people's expressed needs, e.g:

- **Active 8** – An 8 week groupwork programme which focuses on fun activities, which promote physical activity, including junior gym
- **Goal Plus** – A football group run in partnership with Leeds United encourages confidence building and teamwork
- **16+ Group** – A group for young people with a range of abilities and needs. The group have produced a banner focusing on "It's My Life" which shows what is important to them in their lives and 'In One City' – a video project



- **Common Ground** – Young people who have recently settled in the country, run in partnership with LEAP. The group has supported young people in building up confidence to get involved in many activities and produced resources e.g. health issues for young people who have just moved to Leeds and also planned and facilitated workshops at 'Celebrate Innovate', a national conference
- **Media and Arts Group** – focusing on issues through photography, video, music etc
- **Southside Magazine Group** – produce a magazine, focusing on health issues, which include photo stories, problem pages, competitions etc
- **Life and Everything** – 2 Groups – Girls and Boys Life and Everything focus on a range of issues including sexual health, relationships etc
- **Keep Safe Group** – which builds up confidence and helps young

people develop strategies for keeping safe

Drop-in – Time and space where young people can come for information and support on a range of health issues. We also offer a C-Card scheme, sexual health information and free pregnancy testing. The Cupboard also hosts a Connexions Access Point and a full-time Personal Adviser.

Development Work – A vital element of our work is young people's participation. Young people are involved on our steering group and young people's development group and are also involved in the appointment of staff. Development Work also includes the following opportunities for young people:

- Volunteering within South Leeds Health for All
- Peer Education Training
- Consultations and production of resources regarding young people's health

- Planning, facilitating, presenting at local and national events

How are young people involved in shaping the project/ programme?

Young people are involved at all levels:

- Three young people are part of the steering group
- All groups have representation on the Young People's Development Group
- Young people identify the issues they want to address, through group work and development work and 1-2-1 work. They continue to be involved in reviewing the work and plan for the future

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

The Cupboard is part of a Community

Development organisation, which targets the most marginalised groups in the area. The project tailors the work to the needs of groups and does further outreach work to identify further needs and gaps in the area, and to work with young people to meet these needs. The project's fun, informal approach helps young people to feel included and listened to.

Outcomes

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

- Young people develop skills which are transferable to the job market, such as communication skills, team work, research skills, facilitation skills and organisation skills
- Young people develop a sense of ownership of the project and a sense of belonging in the community
- Increased self-confidence, e.g. to take part in physical activity
- Increased awareness of issues, e.g. drugs etc

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

- Young people have a greater sense of belonging within the community

and are more able to participate in community activities, consultations and community action

- Young people have become volunteers in community projects, including the Children's Project and Mobile Crèche

How does the project contribute to local health priorities?

The Cupboard is partly funded by PCT through Choosing Health Funding and therefore works towards meeting the following PCT Health targets including Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol, Physical Activity, Healthy Eating and Healthy Lifestyles, Emotional Health and Wellbeing.

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

Young people are accredited through 'Getting Connected' and local accreditation

Measuring Effectiveness

The project measure effectiveness with all stakeholders in the following ways:

- The Steering Group and Young People's Development group have regular reviews of work





- There is an annual staff review, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of activities and individual's progress (SSRV info. To follow)
- All staff have supervision and there is an appraisal system
- An in-depth evaluation was completed in 2004
- A further in-depth evaluation will be complete by March 2008

Factors that help delivery of healthy Youthwork

- Being part of a well established Community Health Development Organisation which has worked with the most disadvantaged local communities since 1991.
- Young People's involvement at all levels in shaping the project – identifying what works for them
- Offering a range of support to meet young people's varying needs, being flexible in 'going the extra mile' and providing long term support rather than short term.
- Excellent communication within the team, through weekly team meetings, supervision, staff away days and skill shares

Factors that hinder this work

- Short term funding – it's a constant headache spending time finding funding to keep the work going

Partnership/ multidisciplinary working

What other agencies do you work with?

The project works in partnership with many agencies from both the statutory and voluntary sectors including: Leeds Primary Care Trust (PCT); Cockburn College of Arts; South Leeds High School and The Children's Society LEAP project. There is a strong multi-agency

steering group which offers clear direction to the project. When working in partnership, the Cupboard offers young people led approaches and established relationships with the vulnerable 'hard to reach' young people.

Feedback from partners:

'The Cupboard are an ideal organisation for this work with a dedicated team with a range of talents and experience. They have their finger on the pulse of young people's needs, especially in their local area'. (Learning Mentor at Cockburn College of Arts)

'A highly effective project in listening to local people and helping term to address their health needs.' (South Leeds PCT)

Strategic Impact

The project has been involved at a national level with Healthy Youth Work guidelines and has been involved in national conferences focusing on youth work practice, e.g. 'Celebrate Innovate'

On a local level the Cupboard is part of the Youth Work Partnership which brings together the statutory and voluntary sectors and is part of Extended Schools, Healthy Schools, Local Youth Work Networks and ABC Work Schools. The project continues to have a role in locally shaping good practice in work with young people.

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