

Peace4Youth News-Issue 6 Winter/Spring 2019-20

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Don't Look Behind You

*Lost and unsure, I searched for a faint light
When my essence was prepared to give its final fight.
In my soul, I needed guaranteed direction
It's the only way I could provide my mind protection.*

*Slowly I vulnerably opened my world and my heart
A new cycle, thought process, a path of discovery I can
see start.*

*Learning to alter my perception every day
It enables me to think in a more positive way.*

*The paths of life are intertwined
To stimulate the thoughts in my mind.
Positivity, dreams and hopes on the future I bestow
Sowing the seeds of tomorrow, I feel the self-belief
grow.*

**-Niamh McCormack, 23
Futures Participant**

Relax!

The Banbridge Group, being aware that exam time was near, identified the need for skills to use over this stressful time. Keyworkers responded to the needs of the young people and delivered a group-work session in relaxation techniques and stress management. The session introduced the concept of stress and explored different ways of managing stress both practically and emotionally.

All young people contributed to a group discussion around what stress means to them and how they manage this during difficult periods in their life.

All young people were provided with the "Steps to Deal with Stress" booklet and completed a number of relaxation exercises with the group which focuses on breathing and relaxation of muscles and helps to calm the mind.



Leaping into Good Relations!

Young People from different groups and backgrounds had a fun filled day at Todd's Leap. The activities facilitated building relationships and empowering young people to make friends with others from a different community background. Young People spent time with peers from a different background which helped break down prejudice and discrimination barriers. They worked together in teams to achieve fun goals through the activities at Todd's Leap, this developed relationships and reduced stereotypes in a fun way.

They had the opportunity to try a number of activities which promoted physical health and confidence and self-esteem which had a positive impact on their overall mood and emotional wellbeing.





Expert by Experience: Volunteers Take the Lead...

On the 18th January, the first of our new Strive cohort of young people came together for a programme-wide activity. Young people from East, West, North Belfast and Donegal came together in Maghera. Our Expert by Experience volunteers had worked closely with Tina, our cross-site worker, to plan and deliver an interactive day.

The Expert by Experience volunteers created and led different teambuilding activities for the young people to take part in. Young people were mixed into different groups and for many this was their first-time meeting peers from across the border. Katie, our Expert by Experience from Include Youth Donegal said, "I liked the way the EBE's got to take over and experience what it is like to be a youth worker; it was good experience for me to see if I would like this job".

Tina, our cross-site worker, ended the day by saying "From our debates today the main thing we have discovered is that all of you here want to live in a more peaceful society. By participating on Strive you are contributing to peace building in Northern Ireland and Ireland, so that is why we are here and why we will be hosting many more cross-site and programme wide activities throughout the year".



Smart Goals!

One of our Transform cohorts is working in a school setting in Portadown. Youth Workers, Lauren and Darren have been working with a group of 25 year 10 pupils from St John the Baptist College, Portadown and Brownlow Integrated College, Craigavon. As part of the project the young people will achieve 2 OCN Level qualifications, Handling Life's Conflict and Personal Success and Well-being. The focus from November to January has been building confidence within the group and relationship building alongside working on the 1st OCN – Handling life's Conflict. There have been many high points so far with the group. They have settled very well into the new group dynamic, they began work on their own Personal Development Plans which range from scrap-booking their Transform journey to using sketchpads, diaries or One-to-One check ins. The young people also set SMART Goals for themselves and have displayed them in their Transform room and have taken part in lots of team building exercises and games.

Alongside the work the group have done, they have had some fun activities which included taking part in the Daily Mile fitness challenge which is part of the schools initiative for keeping young people healthy and a trip to Infinity Adventure Trampoline and Ninja Park. The upcoming plan for the near future is to continue to work on confidence and relationship building alongside the 2nd OCN work and Face to Face Mentoring which has already begun in January.



New Year, New Groups

We have just entered our fifth cohort of the Third Space programme, with locations in Cavan, Donegal and the Greater Belfast area.

We are looking forward to getting to know the new intake of young people, hearing their stories, and working with them to capture these stories using various digital platforms. Our initial sessions have been a success, with the groups showing a great amount of interest and excitement about completing the course and creating a short film



"I can't wait to get to use the equipment and see our film at the end!" - Participant from Cavan

Our young people appreciated the opportunity to use our audiovisual equipment, which most have not had the chance to experience before. The camera-drone seems to have been the highlight of week one! They also partook in their first creative activity, taking photos for a short stop-motion animation. This was edited and shown to each group in the second week

It was a great start to the programme, with the young people being eager and engaged. We have already begun building a rapport with the group, and we are anticipating discovering key issues that are important to them to build their films around.



"When we were taking the photos for the animation I wasn't expecting much, but it turned out to be really great, once the effects and music were added."

Participant from Carndonagh

Heroes Project Outreach



Fermanagh Heroes recently enjoyed a number of sessions with the service users in Tempo Road Day Care Centre in Enniskillen. In preparation for these sessions the young people participated in a workshop to improve their understanding and knowledge on stroke and dementia. This enhanced awareness enabled the young people to build a rapport with, engage and support the service users over four weeks.



The first week involved ice-breakers, card games and board games giving the young people and service users the opportunity to get to know each other and share their experiences. This was the beginning of something spectacular. After the first session the young people left buzzing and staff were amazed by how both groups integrated and engaged with each other.



Over the next 2 weeks the young people and service users supported each other to make handmade Christmas cards and gingerbread decorations from jumping clay. It was heart-warming to see our young people with autism and/or a learning disability and the service users of the day care, who have been afflicted by stroke or dementia, develop new friendships and support each other through the various activities. The Fermanagh Heroes made tray bakes and other treats to have a tea party for their last session in the day care centre.

This was an incredible end to what was a wonderful experience for all involved. There was music and dancing, conversations flowing and smiles all around. Some of the day care staff were pleasantly surprised with some of the service users' mobility when they got up to dance.



YouthPact –

Reflections on our Autumn/Winter training events.

The Autumn and Winter of 2019/2020 has been an exciting time for the YouthPact team as we have delivered and supported a variety of training events with workers from across all the Peace4Youth partnerships. We would like to thank everyone who attended and contributed their ideas and shared their experiences of practice in order to facilitate growth and learning for themselves and colleagues from across the projects.



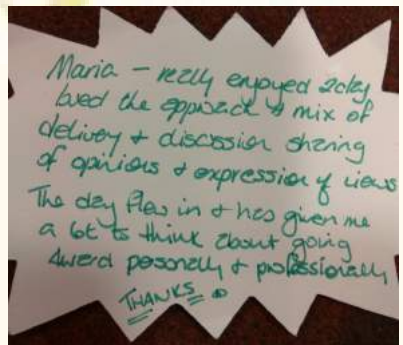
Opening Circle at the YouthPact-led Peace-Building Resources for Working with Groups Session. 16 Jan 2020

“Young people don’t want to live in the past, but they do have an appetite for knowing about it.”

Dr Martin McMullan.



Maria Perkins working with Peace4Youth workers discussing how to move ideas from citizenship to social action in engaging and inspiring young people. 22 Nov 2019



YouthPact- Reflections on our Autumn/Winter Trainings cont.



Youth Work practitioners discussing and exploring best practice, research methodology and useful approaches in engaging young men and boys at the "Introduction to Working with Young Men Training" 12 Dec 2019

Peace4Youth workers testing their determination and problem-solving skills at the YouthPact led Introduction to Life Coaching training. "You are not as constrained as you might believe you are..." -Training Participant 09 Jan 2020





The third YouthPact Young Voices engagement event took place on 20 November 2019, in Dungannon.

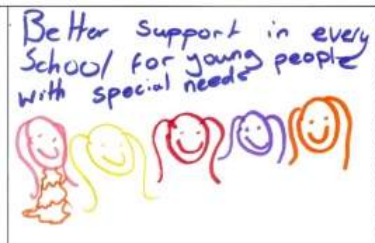
The event was a collaboration with Pivotal, the new public policy think tank for Northern Ireland and was attended by 19 young people and nine workers from six Peace4Youth projects.

The day was built around Vision 2040, a Pivotal Public Policy Forum initiative about visioning the kind of society we want in 20 years time. After the welcome, introductions and energisers, which included an interactive exploration of privilege and power, Pivotal Director, Ann Watt, shared the key facts from their newest publication setting out the top six economic and social challenges facing Northern Ireland today.



Following the presentation there was a 'Vote With Your Feet' exercise to start to unpick some of the ideas included in the report, before young people got down to prioritising the areas of public policy that were most important to them.

Joint first place was Health and Education, followed by Poverty/Disadvantage, then Climate, the Economy and all four groups ranked Community Relations as their fifth and sixth priority.



Last Food bank closes in Belfast We won't need them in the future

The day finished with young people sharing the newspaper headlines they would like to see in 2040. Among these were the virtual end of health care waiting lists, increased support in schools for young people with special needs, poverty levels the lowest in the world and the last food bank closes.



"Hello! My name is Olivia Brabazon and I am a DfE funded PhD researcher in the department of politics at Queen's University Belfast. My PhD studies the relationship between the EU PEACE Programmes and young people's experiences of conflict transformation in Northern Ireland and the Irish border region. Consequently, I am really interested in interviewing individuals who have been involved in coordinating or delivering projects as part of the Peace4Youth programme and to hear their experiences. This would be an opportunity for you to anonymously share your thoughts and feelings regarding your engagement with the PEACE 4 Programme, and the work funded by it, as part of a study independent of the Programme.



If you would be interested in being involved in this research, or would like some further information, please contact me on obrabazon01@qub.ac.uk or on +44 7764871852. I am happy to undertake interviews at a time and place convenient for you, or through Skype or phone calls.

This research has been approved by my school's ethics committee.

Contact Us!



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