ROtherham Youth Cabinet

Body Image & Mental Health Campaign Report

True To You

Funded By: NHS Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group
INTRODUCTION

In 2013, young people from Rotherham Youth Cabinet (RYC) coproduced a manifesto aim that sought to explore and analyse local services and to focus on support for young people who self harm. RYC worked with a wide range of partners resulting in a Council Scrutiny Review which was published in Spring 2014. This review endorsed the ten recommendations made by Youth Cabinet members that were centered around how to improve access for young people as well as seeking more comprehensive help and support related to self-harm. The work on self harm produced by Youth Cabinet members was extremely positive and as a result was incorporated into the Rotherham Self Harm Practice Guidance for professionals and within CAMHS Service Plans.

Following work around self harm, the Youth Cabinet members became acutely aware of the extent of the problems faced by young people accessing support for mental health issues and as a result decided to include mental health in their 2014/2015 manifesto. Before starting this research, the group participated in training to ensure that they all fully understood the potential causes and impact of poor mental health, in order to be equipped to productively undertake this piece of work. During the Manifesto year, there were a number of associated achievements including a member of Youth Cabinet Member contributing to the ‘Mind The Gap’ report on the national and local picture of Mental Health services for young people, which gave ten recommendations on how improvements could be made.

Youth Cabinet Manifesto 2018-2019

When members met to decide the campaigns for their 2018 Manifesto, they decided to continue and build upon their previous focus on Mental Health. The RYC priority during 2018/19 was to organise a conference, along with other activities, to support young people to feel more confident about their body image and to know where to find help and support around this issue.

During 2017 the Youth Cabinet were successful in securing £3000 from the Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group awarded undertake work around Body Image and Mental Health. The following report offers a summary of the work undertaken by members of Rotherham Youth Cabinet with this funding.
‘True To You’ Body Image Conference

In February, 2018, Rotherham Youth Cabinet held a conference for young people and professionals who work with families, children and young people. The conference was held at Myplace in Rotherham and was planned to meet one of the group’s Manifesto Aims for 2018/2019 which was:

‘To organise a conference for young people to help them feel confident about their body image’.

The conference was planned and organised by young people from Rotherham Youth Cabinet. The group responsibility for the smooth organisation of the day including coordinating workshop facilitators, organising conference delegates, time keeping of the programme, presenting on stage and seeking solutions to issues which arose.

A total of 67 young people and 32 staff members from Early Help, RMBC Children & Young Peoples’ Services and the Voluntary and Community Sector, attended the conference; gaining knowledge and understanding strategies to help both themselves and others to build resilience for positive body image.

A wide range of workshops were delivered by health professionals and also young people, which addressed different aspects of body image and associated poor mental health in a hope to ensure young people could select areas of learning which were important to them. Staff workshops were planned to run alongside young people’s workshops, thereby enabling workers to improve their own personal development around this issue.
## Conference Workshops

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO’S DELIVERING THE WORKSHOP</th>
<th>WHAT’S IT ABOUT</th>
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| **Community Eating Disorder Service (CAMHS)** | Effects of Starvation on Self-Perception and Body Image  
Have you ever felt really hungry and thought you saw something that wasn’t there? Or skipped breakfast and lunch and struggled to focus in an exam? These and many more are some of the effects that starvation can have on your body. But more than that, it can also affect the way we process information, including how we feel about ourselves, how we see ourselves and how we see other people. This workshop aims to explore the effects of starvation, and how this can alter our perceptions of ourselves and our environment |
| **Be Unique – North Lincolnshire Youth Voice** | Being U … Be Unique – Acceptance and Celebration of who we are!  
So who are we? We are all different, all unique in our own way. North Lincolnshire Youth Council promote and celebrate individuality, advocate acceptance of who we are – warts and all! Challenging media imposed ideas of beauty and trends the young people encourage others to embrace their unique qualities through a range of interactive and visual activities and resources. |
| **Members of Rotherham UK Youth Parliament** | The Box - Exploring the negative stigma attached to body image through discussion and games.  
The box is known as society and society has certain perceived norms of what a person should look like. A workshop led by young people which aims to find ways to tackle the stigma associated with body image. |
| **South Yorkshire Eating Disorders Association (SYEDA)** | Food and Feelings  
We all have a relationship with food. Sometimes we eat too much, other times not enough. We share food with others to show we care and we are encouraged to indulge in different foods at special occasions. But for some of us, our relationship with food and body image can dominate our lives. Come and join our workshop for the opportunity to explore issues around food and our bodies which can affect us, from eating disorders to self-care. Our workshop will also include fun activities, discussion and learning ways to help ourselves or a friend who may be struggling with some of these issues. |
| **Rotherham and Barnsley MIND** | Positive body image - To help promote positive body imagines and not to let the effect for Photoshop and social media effect this |
| **Children and Adolescence Mental Health Services** | Self Harm  
A workshop to support young people who self harm |
| **BARNARDOS Reach Out Service** | Self-esteem and Vulnerability  
The workshop will look at whether Self Esteem and Vulnerability are connected, and explore if poor self-esteem/body image can contribute to risk factors around CSE, grooming and abuse. |
| **Chilypep – Sheffield** | Challenging Stigma Around Body Image  
Feeling good about yourself and raising self esteem |
| **CLAIRE HADDON** | LGBT+ Young people and Body Image  
A workshop aimed at young people identifying as LGBT+ to explore body image. |

### STAFF WORKSHOPS

| Rotherham Youth Cabinet | STAFF WORKSHOP – Sharing Positive Practice  
Discussion around what is happening and how we can work together and share positive practice. |
| SYEDDA | STAFF WORKSHOP – Supporting young people with eating disorders |
| Rotherham Youth Cabinet | STAFF WORKSHOP – Myth Buster  
Bursting body image myths |
Evaluation Comments...

Some comments received from participants of the conference:

The ones we supported all loved the day and said they had made friends, had fun in the workshops and felt more able to talk to others, feel better about themselves and were glad they had been part of the day.

Staff really enjoyed it. Young people loved it, two of them especially went running out to their Nan saying what a fun and really good day they had had and wouldn’t shut up telling her about it. (Early Help Worker)

When I took my young people home they were really positive about the event and feel that there should be more of this. One of my girls said she now understands that she should be happy with who she is and feel proud (Early Help Worker).

Please can I thank the young people who got on stage and talked today especially those who gave their stories, they are brilliant.

From CAMHS Manager (in response to Youth Cabinet led staff workshop feedback) - thank you so much for this, it is really helpful and it will go towards the improvement planning for Rotherham CAMHS

Young people said they had made more friends at the event than they have made in school (Early Help Worker).

Such a privilege to open the event and what an amazing speaker at the beginning (Ian Thomas)

All workshops were a safe space

Young person led consultation was great

Very much young person led, very well managed
Evaluation Feedback

What Did You Learn?
- Supporting each other is what we need to do
- Not to make assumptions
- More about body image
- Being True to Me
- How Early Help workers work
- Change can be made if we work together
- Self-confidence how to make lavender dough
- That I'm in a good relationship
- Coping Mechanisms
- Eat Healthy
- Just be yourself don't change for anyone else
- To accept myself
- Be unique Body Positivity
- Body positivity
- Not to be ashamed of your body
- Good information regarding eating disorders
- To accept yourself
- The effects of positive Self Esteem
- Everything not to do with self harm
- I learnt more about Eating disorders
- That it's easy to meet new people
- That both young men and women can be insecure
- A lot about body image
- Lots
- That you are perfect in your own way
- A lot about body appearance
- To be myself
- That I'm perfect and special in my own way
- What Bulimia is
- Where to go to talk for help

Best Bit of the Day?
- Running a workshop with a great bunch of young people
- Speaking to young people
- Music
- Self Harm Workshop
- Crafts
- Meeting enthusiastic young people and Staff
- Young people presenting
- Making stress balls, lavender dough, glitter jars
- Chillypep Workshops
- Making A mess
- Lunch
- SYEDA Workshop
- Be Unique Workshop
- Seeing people with the same difficulties as me
- Be Unique
- Self Harm
- Meeting new people
- Eating Disorders Workshop
- Session 3 Self Harm
- Making new friends
- I made friends
- Creating a poster in be Unique
- The Glitter jars and stress ball
- Making Friends
- Barnados
- Mind Workshop
- The Art
- Everything
- Chillypep
- Be unique
- Making Jam Jars
- Talking with new people I met
- Making stress balls
- Dieting Games
- Food and Wifi
- Food and music performances

What Could be Better?
The majority of responses to this question indicated that nothing could be better. Other comments included:
- Longer
- Food
- More chocolate cake
- More fun activities
- A bit more organised
- Variety of activities, signs related to topic we are talking about
- More creative things
- More variety of workshops - needs to be done again
- More hands on workshops
When asked what young people would do differently as a result of the day, responses included:

- Continue to promote Self Esteem
- Be supportive to all who need support and I will talk positively about today's experience
- Have less time on my Xbox
- Continue to work with young people to make change
- Learn to trust myself more, remember who's there for me and think before I act when stressed
- Continue helping young people and mental health
- Mental Health ambassador in school
- Remember what I've learnt
- Be Unique
- Understand a lot more about mental health
- Continue to spread the word about positive body image
- Think about body acceptance
- Be more positive
- Have improved knowledge of services in Rotherham and key agencies
- Be aware of what resources there are in Rotherham
- Be more considerate
- Spread the message about body positivity
- Try not to self harm
- More confident
- Be more social because I have been very social and talking to people I don’t know
- Learn to accept myself more
- Go easier on myself
- Be more calmer
- Be more aware of people’s feelings
- Not be so self conscious
- Eat more
- Have more confidence
- My glitter jar for stress
- Help others and socialise more
- Be more aware of other people
- Be more positive about my body image
- I will not judge
- Be confidence in myself
- I will be there for others
Young people were asked to grade their experiences of individual workshops and the day overall on a scale from 5 being the best and 1 being not so good. All workshops were rated with a majority of positive ratings. Of the feedback completed, this scoring was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day Overall</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Cabinet Staff Workshops</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYEDA</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>UKYP</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>BE UNIQUE</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBT</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>BARNARDOS</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIND</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHILYPEP</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAMHS EATING DISORDERS</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAMHS SELF HARM</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</table>
**ADDITIONAL PROJECT WORK**

In addition to the conference, three further projects were delivered as a result of the funding received from the Clinical Commissioning Group:

**DRAMA AND PERFORMANCE**

A group of young people are currently rehearsing a play called Cinderella Drizzlepop which will be performed in June 2018. The funding from Rotherham CCG has enabled young people to buy costumes, wigs and shoes to be used within the performance. The play is based on Cinderella but will be mixing up gender stereotypes and traditional images, roles and stereotypes about body image being challenged. At the end of the performance there will be a question and answer session with young people with a discussion around body image and mental health. This is a creative way to challenge pre-conceptions about body image and to help young people feel more body confident.

**MENTAL HEALTH FILM**

As part of the Youth Cabinet’s Manifesto Aim, young people decided they wanted to create a short film to explore a particular issue relating to poor mental health which could be used as an educational resource for other young people.

A film has been created. This film was written, filmed, directed and edited by young people and is 100% a young person creation. Members of Youth Cabinet acted within the production, which was filmed at Lifewise at Hellaby. Funding from CCG provided rehearsal and filming venues to be accessible for the project. The film will be available on Youtube in the near future.
MIND, BODY, SOUL RESIDENTIAL

Members of Youth Cabinet helped to plan and participated in a Mind, Body, Soul residential. The residential was aimed at young people who have experienced mental health issues and provided a range of activities aimed at creating resilience and more positive emotional wellbeing.

The residential took place over one night/two days at Early Help’s Crowden Outdoor Activity Centre and young people were referred in from Early Help Workers across the borough. Members of Youth Cabinet also attended to work on improving their personal mental health.

Activities provided were designed to enable young people to have new experiences, recognise methods of relaxation which work for themselves, build resilience and also improve confidence and self-esteem, which in turn will support their positive emotional wellbeing.

Sixteen young people from across the borough attended the residential during March 2018. Activities offered to the young people included:

- Creative Writing
- Growing Positives and Burning Negatives
- Nature Walk
- Massage
- Art and Crafts
- Mindfulness
- Identifying Skills and Knowledge
- Relationship Building
- Group Games

The young people who participated made new friends and many have stated they will keep in touch which in turn, has formed a new support network for them.

The Evaluations from the weekend included:

“Just to let you know the feedback from the young people who went on the weekend was excellent. “Epic” and “Amazing” were some of the words used. Thanks so much for enabling this to happen – I am certain it will make a big difference to their confidence, self-esteem and social skills” Early Help Worker
“I thought it would be someone in a tie-dye jogging suit telling us what to do, but I now understand that the residential was more about trying new experiences rather than learning how to do stuff. It's like going to a spa – you don’t learn how to do the treatments you have the experience to make you feel better and then learn what is good for you to do to feel good about yourself”. **Young Person**

“I thought coming by myself I wouldn’t feel welcome but I feel that I have been able to let my guard down and be myself”. **Young Person**

Further Evaluations from young people attending included:

“Before I came I felt nervous and scared now I felt happy as I have made new friends and had a good weekend”

“Before I came, I felt nervous because I don’t know other people, now I feel happy”

“I felt nervous before I came but now I feel happy as it was good meeting now people and I really enjoyed this and would love to do it again”

“I thought I would be the only odd one there and everyone would be in groups. Now I feel good as I’m going home with new friends and now I can make friends easier”

“I felt unwelcome because I didn’t know anybody, I was self-conscious but now I feel confident and feel like I have known everyone for years”.

“I felt nervous and scared but now I felt like we all connected fast and I feel that we will be friends forever”

“I felt nervous and anxious and I didn’t want to come but now I feel happy because I have made new friends and enjoyed everything.”

“Before I came I felt anxious, nervous and uncomfortable. Now I feel happy, I’ve had fun and made friends”

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*Rotherham Youth Cabinet members would like to thank Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group, Early Help & Family Support Services, Conference Workshop deliverers and everyone else who has supported them so far with their Body Image and Mental Health campaigns.*

**Rotherham Youth Cabinet**

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