

Actively Involving Children and Young People Partnership Update - October 2009

Background Information

Every organisation that provides a service to children and young people has a duty to involve them in the planning and evaluation of the service. By doing this organisations will find that services become more relevant, accessible and better used by children and young people.

The participation of children and young people is an important part of strategic plans and it is something that we all need to include in our day to day work. The Actively Involving Children and Young People's Partnership (AICYPP) aims to help agencies to put this requirement into practice.

How the Partnership began

The AICYPP is a multi-agency partnership project. It was set up in late 2007 to support all local organisations wishing to improve the involvement of children and young people in the shaping and delivery of public services in the district. Following a number of multi-agency meetings funding was identified by **Harrogate Borough Council** and **North Yorkshire County Council (Integrated Services)** to support the development of this work (£22K). The project was endorsed by **Harrogate District Strategic Partnership** in November 2007. A small steering group for the project was developed, including: - the funders; other NYCC representatives; Harrogate Council for Voluntary Services and Harrogate Hospital.

Phase 1

Phase 1 of the project ran from April 2008- April 2009. A project brief was developed by the Steering Group and expressions of interest to host the project were requested and **North Yorkshire Youth (NYY)** was awarded the project. An action plan with key objectives and milestones was developed and a formal agreement between the funders and NYY.

A full time Participation Worker (Rachel Allen) was appointed to NYY in May 2008 to focus on this project. Throughout Phase 1, over 400 children and young people were involved in participation work. Topics which they gave their views on ranged from play equipment to youth council priorities. Activities and events for partner agencies were provided and over 50 professionals from a range of organisations were supported to actively involve children and young people in the development of services.

Within Phase 1 the main achievements were:-

- The Network was established with a clear role and resources
- A comprehensive register of consultation was set up
- Training was developed, run and improved
- The success of the project meant that longer term funding was secured from a wider range of partners

Phase 2

The Steering Group decided that the main focus for Phase 2 of the project should be to:-

- Provide on-going co-ordination and support to the Children and Young People's Network
- Embed the active involvement of children and young people in the shaping and delivery of public services in the Harrogate District
- Ensure close and effective links with Youth Councils

This year the partnership has 4 funders: - **Harrogate Borough Council, North Yorkshire County Council (Integrated Services), Harrogate District Safer Communities Partnership and North Yorkshire Police** (£20K).

Again, a project brief with key objectives was developed by the Steering Group and expressions of interest were invited. **North Yorkshire Youth and Harrogate CVS** worked together on a proposal to deliver the project between them and they were jointly awarded the project (£14K). Due to the success of Phase 1 the project has gone from having 2 funders and 1 deliverer to 4 funders and 2 deliverers in the space of 12 months. This has implications for the Steering Group and partnership working.

Over Phase 2 of the project Harrogate CVS and North Yorkshire Youth will be working towards the following project objectives, with support from the Steering Group:-

Harrogate CVS	North Yorkshire Youth
Maintenance of a register of current and planned consultation and involvement	Identification and sharing of current good practice in line with national Hear by Rights standards and North Yorkshire's HYBRID
Maintenance of a register of consultation results which is shared by partners	Identification of training needs around children and young people's participation
Support the Harrogate District AICYP Network	Work with practitioners to develop a training programme for organisations and practitioners to improve the quality of consultation and participation in the Harrogate district
Raise awareness of the role that different partners and organisations have in working with children and young people in the district	
Monitor and review the role of the Harrogate District AICYP Network	Provide a bank of advice, guidance and expertise on children and young people's participation
Advise partners on funding opportunities to develop participation within their organisations	

Members of the Steering Group have a number of responsibilities including: - to ensure that the partnership meets the funder's objectives; link the work carried out by NYY and CVS with other relevant developments e.g. Youth Councils; promote the partnership in their own organisations and explore the sustainability of the partnership.

For more information on the Project Steering Group please contact:
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