

UK YOUTH EMPOWERHER

Cohort One Progress Summary

May 2019

EMPOWERHER

UK YOUTH

In partnership with



Funded by

Proudly supporting
youth social action



#iwill



Department for
Digital, Culture
Media & Sport



EMPOWERHER

Inspiring young women and girls to lead change



Delivered in South West,
West Midlands & North West

Youth organisations provide a
Safe Space for youth people

Youth workers are trusted
adults for young people

Regional
partnerships



Regular sessions in small groups
YW&Gs learn about female-
specific issues & wellbeing



YW&Gs lead social
action projects



Young women & girls
empowered to identify &
lead change



Opportunities for meaningful social
action with BRC

Access to
inspirational female
role models

Leadership
training from YWT



"They had low self-esteem, were very quiet and suffered from mental health issues. I stand by that they were the best people for the programme having delivered. They've come out of their shell, their confidence has developed and they're taking part in activities outside the club. Actually hearing the voices around the club has been really nice because they wouldn't even speak before"

EmpowHER Youth Worker

EMPOWERHER

Cohort One

328 YW&G
engaged
286
completed 30
hours or more

130
completed

UK YOUTH
Achievement Awards

 **BritishRedCross**
189
YW&Gs
engaged
with BRC


75 Role Models
recruited

2
Be Your Best Self
trainings




Resources
created &
shared


Regional
collaboration


**Celebration
events**

UK YOUTH

Social learning

Social learning has proved to be a vital ingredient of EmpowHER – providing a safe space for YW&Gs to get to know each other, delve into topics that affect them and share their feelings. The areas covered have varied widely with the diverse group of YW&Gs we work with & youth workers have tailored sessions according to interest and need.

COMMON SOCIAL LEARNING TOPICS

- Positive relationships
- Local politics and community issues
- Women's rights and gender stereotypes
- Drugs and alcohol
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Sexual health and rights
- Refugees
- Loneliness
- Self-esteem and body image



Social action

286 YW&Gs completed 10 hours or more of social action as part of Cohort One. Activities were wide ranging and many were encouraged to start with “light touch” activities, workshopped and presented by the BRC Youth Engagement Workers. Once YW&Gs had built confidence with small social action, they went on to lead larger events and campaign around issues they cared about. 15 groups were awarded additional funding from the “Social Action Project Fund” to lead bigger change & practise planning & budgeting skills.

COMMON SOCIAL ACTION TOPICS

- Women's rights and gender stereotypes
- First Aid
- Mental health
- Women in need including domestic violence and period poverty
- Refugees
- Elderly loneliness
- Self-esteem and body image

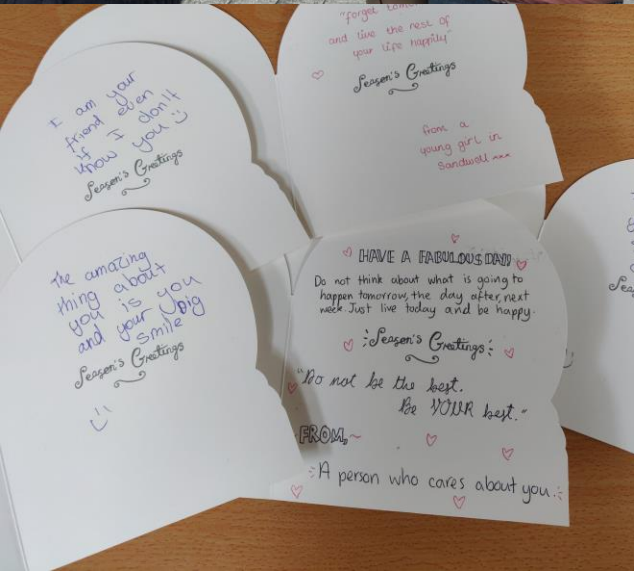
COMMON SOCIAL ACTION ACTIVITIES

Smaller social action projects:

- Sending Christmas cards to elderly people that might be lonely
- Fundraising through creating items to sell such as cakes, key rings, t-shirts, cards
- Collections e.g. toiletries / baby products/ food / presents

Larger social action projects:

- Hosting events for community members
- Campaigning via social media, poster and video campaigns and in public areas
- Leading educational sessions with other YW&G
- Volunteering at community events e.g. Refugee Week and International Women's Day events





Role Models

Inspiring female role models have been used throughout Cohort One as a mechanism for YW&Gs to explore themselves, their aspirations and what women before them have achieved. The BRC team have recruited over 75 role models who have engaged with groups through video, talks & sending inspirational messages. Other groups have used role models as a theme in their social learning sessions, exploring who and what a role model is and met local inspiring women.

**Kate Hollern,
MP Blackburn**

“She’s just a normal girl from Blackburn. That makes you feel like you can do anything you want. It makes you think oh we’re not useless and we can become something. She was a normal person and we could become that as well in the future.”

**Nikki Varley,
Wigan Youth Zone**

“She is a former boxer, rugby player and she’s a professional rapper. She has done raps about the glass ceiling, female empowerment and inequality”

Tabyyibah Mota

Fine Art student at Coventry University. Her art centres on identity, in particular what it means to be British, Indian and Muslim.

“They all still talk so positively and you can feel an immense amount of rub off around things she’d said.”

A lady came in and covered the topic of suffragettes but she’s a working class lady, single mum, was living in poverty but achieved a doctorate and now campaigns for women rights in the local area. They had a questions and answers session. These ladies are in their 50s and the girls presented some of their own worries about being older females and they gave them that encouragement but were honest with them with the challenges that they’d face



UCO
 ACCRINGTON ROAD & LITTLE HARWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE

- Girls Groups
- Function Hire
- NEET Projects
- Luncheon Clubs
- Ladies Gym Sessions
- Mum and Toddler Groups
- Junior & Senior Youth
- Ladies AWAAZ Groups
- Mens Social Club
- Private Tutorials

EMPOWER
 Inspiring young women
 girls to lead change

UK YOUTH

ucoorganisation@gmail.com
 @uniting

EmpowHER young women from UCO meet Kate Hollern, MP for Blackburn



EmpowHER young women from PYF challenge identity and representation through a photoshoot with local role model Tayyibah Mota



Partnerships



Highlights from Cohort One

- Strong engagement and relationships built with delivery partners.
- 186 YW&G engaged in BRC activity with £600 fundraised.
- A series of successful events including Tiffany's Circle and BRC Learning Event to raise the profile of the programme.

What's next?

- A united EmpowHER team – streamlined support for partners.
- Better tech to enable efficient collaboration.
- More face-to-face meet ups.
- Planning for sustainability & legacy.



Highlights from Cohort One

- Successful design and delivery of Be Your Best Self training for EmpowHER graduates
- Tailoring of the workshop for under 16s and flexible approach
- 90% of attendees said they would recommend the session

What's next?

- Delivery of South West session on May 29th
- Full debrief of evaluation & learnings
- Engaging specialist expertise to support training gaps for workers



Sector wide activity

Impact Partner



GENERATION
CHANGE

Achieving
**better
outcomes**
for young
people
and
society

IMPACT ACCELERATOR

- The UK Youth team have completed phases 1-3 of the Impact Accelerator with Generation Change.
- We are currently in phase 4 delivering against our improvement plan with support from Dartington research team.
- The accelerator has enabled collaboration across the youth social action sector with lasting relationships built with organisations such as Young Minds and Football Beyond Borders to share best practice.

#iwill

SHARING WITH #iwill

- UK Youth continues to be connected with #iwill through a strategic partnership
- Leadership Team relationship including Deputy CEO, Maddie Dinwoodie sitting on Scale & Reach Board.
- Impact & Learnings are regularly shared as EmpowHER develops
- Shared comms activities are identified e.g Youth Social Action Day on 5th June.

UK YOUTH



Communications

There has been strong comms engagement in Cohort One, with all partners engaging with social media, particularly Twitter to raise the profile of the programme and the issues we seek to address.

Regular videos and blogs have been produced from delivery staff, BRC, UK Youth and most importantly, young women and girls themselves!

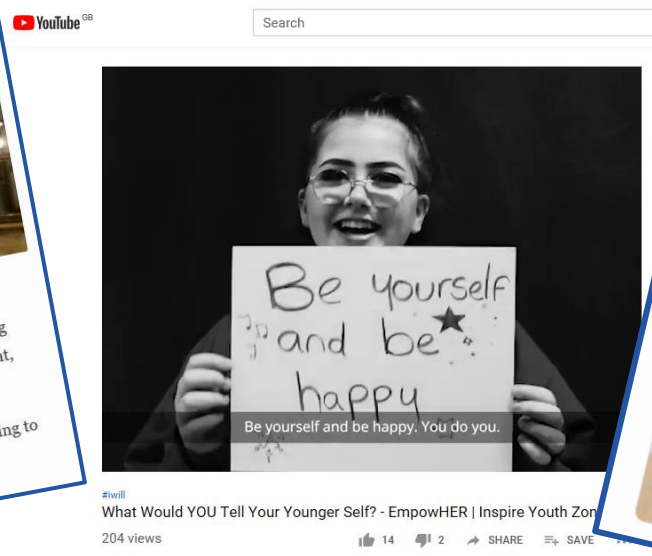
Sharable images and videos can be found here at this link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/home/Spirit%20of%202012%20comms%20sharing%20file/Report%20photos%20May%202019>

BRC EmpowHER Blog



Video from EmpowHER YA&Gs in Chorley



UK Youth promoting MHAW 2019 blog





Celebration

Events



Key findings from EmpowHER Cohort 1

EmpowHER reached and engaged its target audience

- YW&Gs average wellbeing was below the national average for 10-17 year olds.
- 89% of YW&G had at least one personal barrier, with over 1 in 3 experiencing poor mental health.
- YW&G started the programme with lower emotional and social capabilities than young people beginning other UK Youth programmes.

EmpowHER had a positive impact on young women and girls' wellbeing

- Upon completion of the programme, EmpowHER participants reported a far closer pattern of well-being to the UK population average than when they began, and they were much more likely to report an increase in their well-being than it being static or decreasing.
- YW&G built strong, supportive relationships and reported improved self esteem, increased optimism about the future and reduced social isolation.
- YW&G felt less isolated by their problems, are more able and willing to talk about how they feel and improved their knowledge around mental health and how to care for their wellbeing.

EmpowHER challenged and changed limiting perceptions

- EmpowHER reduced YW&G's limiting perceptions of their ability, appearance and their gender.
- YW&G's limiting perceptions of others were also challenged, including people experiencing homelessness, those with poor mental health and refugees.
- EmpowHER supports YW&G to challenge perceptions that others hold of them, specifically those related to their gender, age and appearance.

Young women and girls are empowered to identify and lead change

- YW&G's confidence in their capabilities and capacity to advocate their beliefs have improved.
- YW&G are more motivated and confident in taking the lead.
- YW&G's emotional and social capabilities improved, particularly confidence, communication skills, personal responsibility and resilience.
- EmpowHER instils belief in YW&G that they can make positive change in their community.

EmpowHER improved social cohesion on a small scale

- YW&G's gained awareness of issues in their community and felt a sense of belonging within their group.
- EmpowHER created opportunities for YW&G to meet different people, but more can be done by supporting more YW&G to engage with community members during social action projects.

EmpowHER motivated young women and girls to take part in social action but there are significant barriers to overcome in order to create long-term, meaningful social action habits

- YW&G are motivated to engage in future social action, with some already participating in new projects after completing EmpowHER.
- Significant barriers to engaging in social action mean that only 34% of YW&G are likely to take part in social action in the next 12 months.

EmpowHER is having a positive impact on the youth sector and reaching community members

- Youth clubs have increased their reach, raised their profile and improved partnerships with local organisations.
- Youth organisations have used their learning from EmpowHER to improve opportunities available to young people by reviewing their offer, creating new opportunities and making social action more accessible.
- Over 2,350 community members have been supported by EmpowHER social action projects



Learnings into Action: YW&G

WHAT WE'VE LEARNT

Age

- Delivery partners have flexed and adapted EmpowHER significantly for younger and older age groups.
- Younger groups tended to focus on preventative style sessions, introducing concepts around wellbeing. Older groups placed more importance on safe space to open up and connect around female specific issues.

Previous Social Action exposure

- In Cohort 1 the percentage of YW&G that had previously done social action matched the national average.
- The criteria for measuring meaningful social action is lengthy and therefore a challenge to capture.

Enablers driving outcomes

- We have identified key enablers found to be driving the 5 outcomes including the size & age of groups, delivery space, length of engagement and topics covered.

Youth-led, meaningful social action

- Social action had greater impact on YW&G when they had choice in what they did. When they connected with their community their was also greater impact on social cohesion.

Connecting to something bigger

- Strong feedback that YW&Gs benefit from feeling "part of something bigger"

HOW WE'RE ADAPTING

- Delivery partners are focusing on recruiting older age group for Cohort 2
- Webinar was used to communicate importance of wide spread age engagement and tailoring approach.
- Age is now a "Core" programme element – ensuring groups are made up of YW&Gs of a similar age to one another (4 year age bracket)
- Resources have been adapted and more guidance created around age-appropriate content and tailoring for younger/older groups.

- UK Youth have re-communicated the requirement of "not having participated in social action before" to delivery partners to guide recruitment
- We have developed our measure of engagement in previous social action to include regularity as a factor of meaningful social action.

- We have used the enablers to re-define what is "core" about the programme and what can be "flexed" by delivery partners (see core/flex slide 18)
- UK Youth and BRC will ensure delivery partners are reminded and supported of core elements and quality assurance visits will focus around these criteria

- BRC Youth Engagement Workers in place to support this type of social action and support balance of youth-led choice and adult-led opportunities & idea generation
- These enablers was made explicit to delivery partners in webinar training, encouraging YW&Gs to define their "community" and look for opportunities to directly engage

- UK Youth, BRC and YWT as national organisations using connections to create opportunities for YW&Gs to come together
- Continue to use celebration events to further connect groups with wider region.
- Use EmpowHER brand to connect YW&Gs e.g through hoodies / hashtags / video content
- Use role models & peer leaders to give sense of project "movement"



CORE

Unusual suspects

The programme remains focused on YW&Gs who have low wellbeing and do not regularly participate in meaningful social action.

Group size & dynamic

Groups should be female-only of between 7-12 participants and ideally meeting in a closed space, away from other groups to encourage open, safe sharing.

Age of participants

The programme is targeted at YW&G aged 10-12, with particular focus on transition ages (10-12 & 16-18.) In Cohort Two recruitment should focus on older age range. Content and style should be adapted for age-appropriateness using guidelines provided by UK Youth.

Programme Length

YW&Gs minimum engagement is 12 weeks, meeting regularly in that time. Where possible partners can extend to the full 6 months and ideally beyond!

Social learning & social action

YW&Gs must participate in both social learning & social action; using social learning to help ready & guide social action.

Youth-led social action

YW&Gs must have choice and agency in their social action activity. Social action should be meaningful and impactful on the community.

Wellbeing as a topic

Wellbeing and/or mental health should be included as a topic in the social learning, giving YW&Gs language and tools in this area.



FLEX

Recruitment & engagement approach

It's up to partners and front-line delivery staff to choose the appropriate method for recruiting & engaging YW&Gs on the programme, based on local knowledge and expertise.

Social learning topics & style

Delivery staff can choose what topics they cover/focus on with YW&Gs, tailoring to age, needs & interest of the particular group. Content should cover the "Myself, My Community, My World" structure but in no defined order. Use of all resources, including journal is optional.

Social action themes

The focus of the social action activity is up to the YW&Gs, with guidance & support from delivery staff and BRC Youth Engagement Workers.

UKY Achievement Awards

All YW&Gs who complete EmpowHER are eligible for a UKYAA Bronze, but this is optional, other accreditations make also be suitable.

Use of Role Models

Delivery staff can decide if & how to incorporate role models into EmpowHER for their groups. BRC have a wealth of experience and contacts to support this.

Regional working

Each region is made up of a range of partners and can choose how best to work together to support regional events and create opportunities for YW&Gs.



Learnings into Action: The way we work

WHAT WE'VE LEARNT

Sustainability & Legacy

- There are significant barriers for YW&G to engaging in long-term social action habits, including lack of local opportunities in some areas
- In some cases, once EmpowHER finishes, there is no sustained follow-on support e.g delivery through schools
- However, some YW&Gs are continuing EmpowHER-related groups & activity beyond project engagement and some are involved as peer leaders.

Staff confidence & training

- Some topics in EmpowHER require specialist knowledge and skill e.g. mental health / gender issues

Partnership Working

- There was some lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities of each partner in Cohort One.
- Multiple lines of communication into delivery partners can be confusing & a lot to manage.

Communicating learnings

- There has been a HUGE amount to learn through EmpowHER so far. It's been a challenge to collate all learnings and share the right amount with the appropriate audiences.

HOW WE'RE ADAPTING


- We are using examples from the range of partners delivering to understand what works in terms of sustainable social action opportunities.
- We will continue to champion and support regular regional meetings to encourage sharing and strengthening regional partnerships in this space.
- Where delivery is "drop-in" e.g schools we are working with partners to weigh the risk around lack of follow-on and innovate around ways of continuing engagement in new opportunities.
- The peer leadership role on EmpowHER is evolving, with Cohort One YW&G's who took part in YWT training taking on more responsibility. We will be sharing partner's approaches across the regions to help build out this role and share opportunities.
- The UK Youth and BRC teams are working together on a sustainability strategy, including looking for future sources of funding and support.

- We have increased guidance on Dropbox around sensitive topics.
- We are exploring with YWT around specialist resources and support.
- We are developing the quality social action guidance framework and support for partners.

- We have re-defined the roles of each partner on the project, having learnt what sits best with which teams in Cohort One.
- We communicated the roles and expectations in the training webinar, particularly around the support from the BRC Youth Engagement Workers
- We have put processes in to streamline communication and asks to partners; booking in key dates earlier!

- We are conducting a strategic review with the Comms and Impact & Learning teams to evaluate our approach to sharing learnings.
- We are re-defining our "learning focus" for Cohort Two.
- We are using the Impact Accelerator improvement plan and resource from Dartington and wider network to support knowledge-sharing aims.

Looking ahead to Cohort Two

May 19	June 19	July 19	Aug 19	Sept 19	Oct 19	Nov 19 – Jan 20
Cohort 2 Delivery phase 500+ YW&Gs engaged Regional meetings each quarter					 Celebration Events	Impact & Learning Phase 2

Delivery focus for Cohort Two

- Quality assurance & support against the “core” programme elements – ensure learning is understood & embedded.
- Increasing reach within regions & one additional partner in SW.
- Additional training – using training needs analysis to identify & offer additional youth worker training.
- Maximising partnership working – executing defined roles and playing to strength of each organisation
- Building sustainable practice – through peer leader roles and follow-on opportunities at both young person and organisational level

Research focus for Cohort Two

- Social cohesion and social action habits – how can we further improve progress in these outcomes?
- Engaging and retaining unusual suspects – what motivates YW&G to engage and continue to take part in EmpowHER?
- Programme learning – how can the programme be further improved?
- Double benefit – improve our understanding of how community members benefit from YW&G’s social action



"A girl might feel self-conscious about herself, she might have low self-esteem and low confidence and she might care about her appearance too much. But after EmpowHER she might be happier and have a higher self-esteem and enjoy herself for who she is"

- Participant, EmpowHER*

*Quote not attributed to photo

UK YOUTH

Thank You

ukyouth.org

info@ukyouth.org

020 3137 3810

@UKYouth