



CREATIVE MINDS TOOLKIT





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This toolkit has been developed as part of the Creative Minds arts and well-being project, funded by the Spirit of 2012 Challenge Fund, and managed by Youth Cymru, a national youth work charity in Wales.

Creative Minds was a two-year project, running from 2018-20, involving four Creative Well-being Hubs in South Wales and a network of young Creative Minds Champions. The Hubs supported young people to engage in creative activities and forms of expression to support their mental health and well-being. Young Champions designed and delivered social action projects in their communities in order to support understanding of their own, their peers and their communities' experiences of mental health and well-being.



This toolkit has been developed in collaboration with the four Creative Well-being Hubs across south Wales – Andrew Kent Music Academy, Georgetown Boys and Girls Club, Play It Loud Studio and YMCA Swansea.

Andrew Kent Music Academy Swansea

The Andrew Kent Music Academy is Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service's Music & Multimedia Programme.

The Academy gives disengaged young people the opportunity to learn skills in DJing and music production.

Georgetown Youth Club Merthyr Tydfil

Georgetown Youth Club is an open-access youth club supporting young people aged 11-25 and providing a range of activities and opportunities.

Play It Loud Studio Newport

Play it Loud Studio is a recording and production studio based in Newport, working with budding young musicians to “discover, uncover, and shine the light on artists”.

YMCA Swansea

The focus of YMCA Swansea is to provide young people a safe, supportive place to come and help them to fulfil their potential so that they can belong, contribute and thrive. Facilities at YMCA Swansea include a theatre and recording studio.

The Creative Minds toolkit is designed to be used by youth work staff and volunteers. It includes a range of session plans for arts-based and creative activities, designed to support young people's mental health and well-being. The toolkit also includes information and support on running social action projects and digital campaigns, as well as resources and ideas for evaluating workshops and activities.

The practical information for each activity (resources and instructions) are indicated as a suggestion only. Many variables will influence how the activity will be conducted and each should be adapted to the specific needs of its audience.

We would like to thank Spirit of 2012 for funding the Creative Minds projects and all the young people, youth workers and organisations who took part and contributed to this toolkit.

You can find out more about the project by visiting <https://youthcymru.org.uk/creative-minds/> or following us on social media @YouthCymru and using the #CreativeMindsYC.

Enjoy!

Creative arts and mental wellbeing

Have you ever wondered why so many shops are now selling 'mindful colouring books'? Over recent years the research and case studies have shown a link between the creative arts and our wellbeing. These results suggest that the arts seem to have an important role to play in benefitting our mental health and wellbeing.

But how?

The arts offer an additional tool for support, help, promoting well-being and creating a space for social connection. When we talk about the arts, we include visual and performing arts, such as traditional craft, sculpture, digital art, text, dance, film, literature, music, singing, gardening and cooking- anything where you feel a little creative! Think about your own life, have you ever had positive feelings after baking a cake or singing your favourite song? Have you felt connected to others when learning a new skill together? That's the power of being creative.

Participating in the arts can enable people to deal with a wide range of problems everything from loneliness to mental ill health conditions and psychological distress. Different people will have different experiences and results when working with mindful art activities, however the aim of using art to improve our wellbeing is that it gives you a safe time and place with someone who won't judge you. It helps you make sense of things and understand yourself better as well as helping you resolve complicated feelings or find ways to live with them. Additionally, it helps you communicate and express yourself, which might include feelings

or experiences you find hard to put into words.

Creating art allows many people to express themselves, without having to use words or keep eye contact- both which can feel difficult to do when sharing your feelings. The arts also help at a community level. At different stages in our lives we might face isolation through a loss of social connections, such as friends, family, school and workplace - as well as other limitations such as decreasing physical health. Through getting involved in arts programmes, people can rebuild their social connections and extend existing support in their communities. Getting in touch with others assists in alleviating loneliness and isolation. Engaging in arts, social activities and interaction within our communities can help us understand and move through major challenges we experience whether that is loneliness, isolation, confusion, trauma etc. The arts can help to boost confidence and make us feel more engaged and resilient. Besides these benefits, art engagement also alleviates anxiety, depression and stress.

The great thing about being creative is you can do it whenever suits you and you don't need lots of fancy equipment or tools to do it. Some simple activities can be; join a choir, bake a cake, draw a self-portrait, and witness how you feel before, during and after each activity. If you want to learn more or think you may need more support and could benefit from professional help look at these websites:

- <https://www.nordoff-robbins.org.uk/>
- <https://www.roundaboutdramatherapy.org.uk/>
- <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/drugs-and-treatments/arts-and-creative-therapies/about-arts-and-creative-therapies/>

The sessions in this toolkit have been submitted and developed by our Hub Workers from Andrew Kent Music Academy, Georgetown Boys and Girls Club, YMCA Swansea, and Play it Loud Studio.

Youth workers have been utilising these sessions to work with young people on a weekly basis, improving their creativity skills and wellbeing, as well as incorporating elements of social action and peer education. Our young Creative Minds Champions and hub workers enjoyed the experience of the project and had a lot of freedom with the creative paths they chose to go down. Sessions included wellbeing, music, art, drama, crafts, dance, event management and many others.

Here are some quotes from the youth workers on the project:

"The Creative Minds Project was an important programme delivered to our young people. The majority of the young people we work with come from disadvantaged backgrounds and the project helped us shine a spot light on mental health. The project got us all talking about mental health helping us drive the message it's ok not to be ok. The project brought increased confidence to our young people and made them more resilient to life's challenges."

- Wayne, AKMA

"I'm really glad the project happened really, it enabled young people to keep motivated, and keep focused, it's just been nice finding new ways to learn. Adapting during COVID-19, we found new ways to write together, have a laugh together, and be productive."

- Jamie, Play It Loud Studio

"All young people supported on the project left the sessions feeling more confident and happier. These are observations of Youth Workers during the sessions as young people started working with each other in the studio towards the end of the project after building more confidence to move from one-to-ones to groups. They would recognise different roles from artists to engineers and producers and feel good about working as a team. The young people had the opportunity to try out to see what it's like to work in the music industry which resulted in them feeling more positive about their passions and dreams."

- Gergo, YMCA Swansea

"The highlights this year have been – the mental health event, the young people holding their own performances, seeing the young people go to the theatre for the first time to experience something new. The camaraderie and self-belief in themselves. The encouragement they give to others. Seeing young people taking on more responsibility and planning and organising activities and events both physically and virtually. Also the great partnerships as a result of the project."

- Bethan,
Georgetown Boys and Girls Club

Case Studies

(All case studies have been kept anonymous to protect the identity of the young people.)

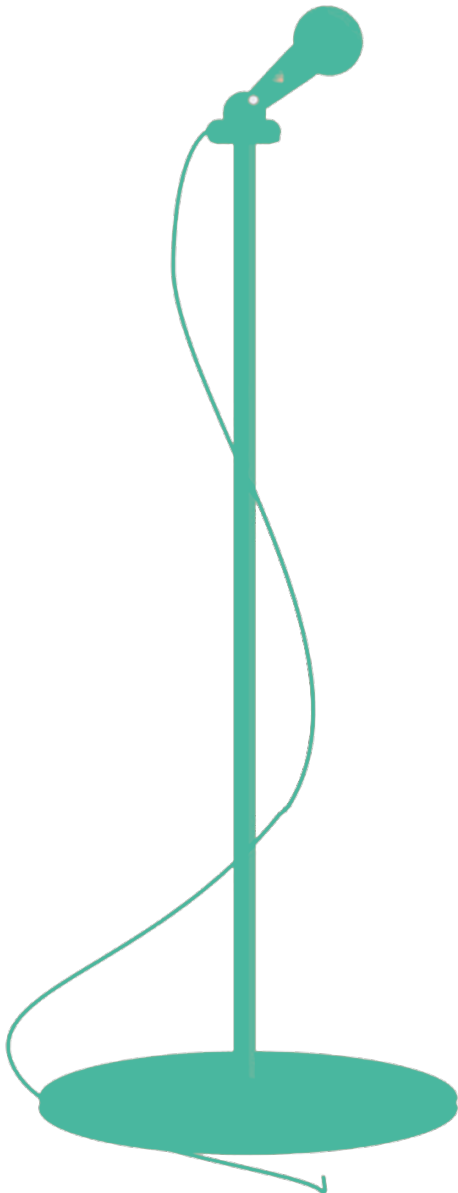
Case Study - 1

This young person has been attending youth since he was 12. He began the Creative Minds Project and as a result his confidence has grown greatly. This young person had a number of mental health problems including self-harm and anxiety. The young person was faced with bullying within the school setting and sometimes outside the school due to his sexuality. The young person had a difficult background with his economic situation and family situation.

When he started the creative minds project he hadn't sang previously but wanted to. Through working on the project we gave the young person tips and lots of encouragement and personal tools he could use. He sang firstly in front of one or two people until he became confident to sing in front of a small audience in an open Mic session within youth club. The young person also performed in a senior citizens home and this encouraged him as he felt he was helping the community. It also made him aware of the issues people faced. Following this young person performed in intro-fest – this was the next big step – it led to him “totally buzzing” from the experience as it increased his sense of wellbeing and achievement.

He has worked on young promoters schemes including dementia project and community project this has increased his self-worth and confidence. Since then he has sang in a community open mic night in a local venue with other young people. He now wants to work on writing his own songs.

Recently however he has lost his best friend and this did knock him back, however due the resilience he has developed through being a part of the creative minds project and youth workers there to work one to one with him he is strong enough to cope with this now and will chat about any issues he has. He has found himself and has had lots of encouragement as a result of the project. At this precise time in his life he no longer self-harms and has learnt a lot about other strategies to deal with urges. He is developing into a confident young man and will need more support but this project has helped him so much as to being his own creative self.



Case Study - 2

B is a 21-year-old young man who has been accessing the recording studio at YMCA Swansea since the beginning of Creative Minds Year 2. Before signing up for the project, he attended college 3 years ago studying music technology at Llwyn Y Bryn, Gower College Swansea. Around half-way through his time there, his attendance dropped, and soon ended up leaving the course due to feelings of depression and anxiety. Living at home doesn't motivate him or support him in any way because his parents struggle with poor mental health and are not financially stable either, which puts a lot of pressure on B as he just wants to be successful and live a happy life.

When B joined the YMCA through a referral from a previous employability project, he was explained that the Creative Minds project focuses on using music, arts and technology as a tool to encourage positive conversations around mental health. During his first session signing up, he said that it is exactly what he is looking for, as he was struggling to find reasons to leave his house. Before his time at the YMCA, he even expressed to me that he would stay in his room for days, sometimes weeks just lying in bed, not feeling up for anything which is when he decided to go to the GP and was diagnosed with depression.

It has been almost half a year supporting B and I can see development in his hygiene, appearance and wellbeing. He used to be late, miss sessions, turn up just after rolling out of bed but now he takes better care of himself, he's bought new clothes and can tell that he gets up earlier to get ready, shower, and eats before getting the bus. One thing he still struggles with is getting to the YMCA more than once a week due to his financial situation which is why he only attends once every week.

The first couple of months on the project he would have one-to-ones as an introduction to how to use a recording studio and how to compose music. Now he has built his confidence and agreed to be working with other champions on the project. He enjoys taking turns sitting in the producer's seat and recording other young champions. He said that it makes him feel important, listened to and valued for the skills he uses during the workshops. We are currently working with B to support him into further education, he recently started learning to drive and is feeling a lot more positive about his aspirations and goals. I believe that this is a perfect project for him as it gives him a good enough reason to get up, leave the house, get stuck into a positive routine resulting in more him wanted to do more and not give up on his dreams of becoming a happy, independent man working in music.

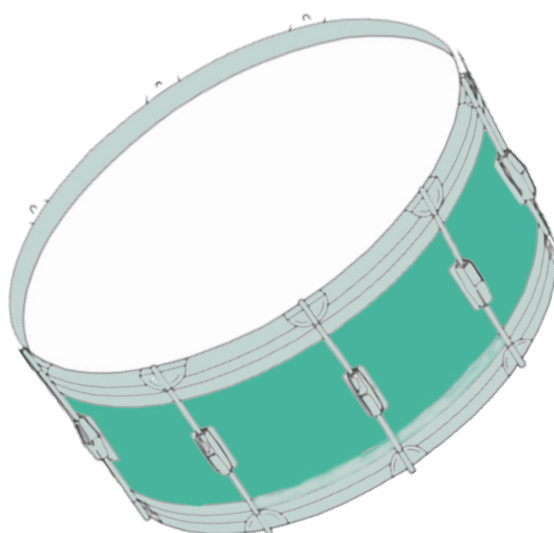
Case Study - 3

A's parents contacted YMCA Swansea to see whether their child could be on our Creative Minds project because they felt that the young person needed to try something new. A was referred to us from a school due to have expressed concerns about their mental health. Their teachers and pupils would pick up on their mood which would be reported to their parents. A was immediately signed up for Creative Minds at YMCA Swansea with the school's permission to leave early on certain days in order for the young person to take part in positive activities.

A's been committing to their drum lessons every week. Sometimes, when the studio would be out of service, A still comes in just to meet with their youth worker because they find it helpful to have somebody to talk to about their day-to-day life and mental health. They often say that they're struggling in school because they find the work too easy and their grades are actually really good. They say that a lot of teachers don't listen and because they would get bored, they would automatically put in for detention. They also express strong opinions about their relationship with their father and older brothers being not so great. A feels like that they get bullied by family too but by having one-to-one sessions, youth workers can support them in how to deal with these things and it seems to work.

A is booked in to perform at Creative Minds events in the Wales Millennium Centre. They are super excited to go on stage and to be around other champions too. A has said that their family relations have got much better and every time they get shouted at, they try and de-escalate the situation and asks the family to calm down and talk normal, showing them a lot of respect.

A continues to come to YCMA Swansea once a week finishing school early and is getting much better at playing the drums as well as have plans for the future in what they want to do when they leave education.



Advice for the following pages:

The categories explained on the following pages are meant to provide a better understanding of the most common mental health issues and dispel the myths that many people have about them. Poor mental health can have damaging physical and emotional consequences. They are not fads, phases or something that someone consciously chooses to take part in.

***If you know someone that may have a mental health issue, encourage them to seek help from a healthcare practitioner. Do not encourage them to utilise these pages as a tool to self-diagnose. ***

A formal diagnosis is often the first step in the road to healing from a mental illness. The right diagnosis can provide a healthcare provider with clear objectives to recovery. To get an accurate diagnosis, the patient is assessed, tested, and asked for relevant information. It is very easy for young people to go on the Internet and do a research of their symptoms. So, it is common that young people will jump to conclusions about a mental health issue.

Self-diagnosis with the help of the internet or reading these resources is fast, easy, and free. However, it can compromise your health especially if the diagnosis is wrong. The two major dangers are:

1. The person's condition progressing untreated
2. Side effects from self-medicating

Use these resources as guidelines to learn and educate young people about the background of mental health issues. This will help to decrease the stigma around mental health and encourage young people to gain knowledge about the subject. Do not hand these sheets to young people with the aim of self-diagnosis. Every mental health disorder is different and certain symptoms may have another explanation, which are not included in these pages. Encourage young people to seek medical assistance or further support from organisations if they are struggling with a mental health issue.

Depression

Summary:

Depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest, which can affect your everyday life.

Main types of Depression and symptoms:

Mild/Moderate and Severe depression:

- Feeling down, upset, or tearful Feeling restless, agitated, or irritable
- Feeling guilty, worthless, and down on yourself Feeling empty and numb
- Feeling isolated and unable to relate to other people finding no pleasure in life or things you usually enjoy a sense of unreality
- no self-confidence or self-esteem hopeless and despairing
- suicidal.

Postnatal depression (PND)

- Depression that occurs in the weeks and months after becoming a parent. Postnatal depression is usually diagnosed in women, but it can also affect men.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

- Experiencing depression during some seasons, or because of certain types of weather
- Having times of year when you feel comfortable. E.g. finding that your mood or energy levels drop when it gets colder or warmer or notice changes in your sleeping or eating patterns.

Dysthymia

- A mild depression that lasts for two years or more. It is also referred to as persistent depressive disorder.
- Dysthymia can feel like your 'normal' and is often noticed firstly by the people close to you.

Link: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/>

How can depression affect your life?

Relationships - Depression will give you a loss of confidence and self-esteem, you may start to avoid and distance yourself from those you feel closest to. You may be more argumentative, aggressive, or close off completely. This can make it harder to maintain/build new consistent relationships.

Job/Education- You may find it difficult to remember or focus on things without being distracted, you might feel demotivated and no longer enjoy activities that you used to.

Health - Sleeping patterns will most likely change due to too much sleep or difficulty sleeping. You may have no appetite and be losing weight or eating too much and gaining weight. Depression can often lead to drug and alcohol abuse, it can also cause physical aches and pains in your body which do not have a clear cause, and can bring out harmful behaviours e.g. self-harm, suicide.

Anxiety

Summary:

People with anxiety disorders frequently have intense, excessive, and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations. Often, anxiety disorders involve repeated episodes of sudden feelings of intense anxiety and fear or terror that reach a peak within minutes (panic attacks).

Main types of Anxiety and symptoms

Generalised Anxiety disorder

- feeling tense, nervous, or unable to relax having a sense of dread, or fearing the worst
- feeling like the world is speeding up or slowing down
- feeling like other people can see you are anxious and are looking at you
- feeling like you can't stop worrying, or that bad things will happen if you stop worrying about anxiety itself, for example worrying about when panic attacks might happen wanting lots of reassurance from other people or worrying that people are angry or upset with you
- worrying that you are losing touch with reality
- rumination - thinking a lot about bad experiences, or thinking over a situation again and again
- depersonalisation -feeling disconnected from your mind or body, or like you are watching someone else (this is a type of dissociation)
- derealisation -feeling disconnected from the world around you, or like the world is not real (this is a type of dissociation)

Panic disorder

- Having regular or frequent panic attacks without a clear cause or trigger.
- Feeling constantly afraid of having another panic attack, to the point that this fear itself triggers panic attacks
- Having a panic attack might include:
- a pounding or racing heartbeat feeling faint, dizzy, or light-headed feeling very hot or very cold sweating, trembling, or shaking nausea (feeling sick)
- pain in your chest or abdomen
- struggling to breathe or feeling like you are choking feeling like your legs are shaky or are turning to jelly

Phobias

- Experiencing intense fear and anxiety when faced with the situation or object that you are afraid of.
- Avoiding situations where you might have to face your fear Feelings of stress
- Feelings of embarrassment Panic attacks

Link: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/>

Health Anxiety

- Carrying out constant self-examination and self-diagnosis Feeling unconvinced by a doctor's reassurance that you are fine
- Experiencing constant preoccupation that you have a serious illness Feelings of distress and anxiety
- Constantly needing reassurance from doctors, family, and friends that you are not ill

How can anxiety affect your life?

Anxiety can affect the way you look after yourself, how you form or maintain relationships and the way you focus on work/ education. When anxiety takes over, it is very difficult to enjoy your leisure time due to constant worry and fear and becomes harder to push yourself out of your comfort zone and try new experiences.

Eating Disorders

Summary:

Eating disorders are serious conditions related to persistent eating behaviours that negatively impact your health, your emotions, and your ability to function in important areas of life.

Main types of Eating Disorders and symptoms

Anorexia Nervosa

- Being considerably underweight compared to people of similar age and height. Very restricted eating patterns.
- An intense fear of gaining weight or persistent behaviours to avoid gaining weight, despite being underweight.
- A relentless pursuit of thinness and unwillingness to maintain a healthy weight. A heavy influence of body weight or perceived body shape on self-esteem.
- A distorted body image, including denial of being seriously underweight. Difficulty eating in public

Bulimia Nervosa

- Recurrent episodes of binge eating, with a feeling of lack of control
- Recurrent episodes of inappropriate purging behaviours to prevent weight gain A self-esteem overly influenced by body shape and weight
- A fear of gaining weight, despite having a normal weight Tooth decay/bad breath
- Hormonal disturbances

Binge Eating disorder

- Eating large amounts of foods rapidly, in secret and until uncomfortably full, despite not feeling hungry.
- Feeling a lack of control during episodes of binge eating.
- Feelings of distress, such as shame, disgust, or guilt, when thinking about the binge-eating behaviour.
- No use of purging behaviours, such as calorie restriction, vomiting, excessive exercise or laxative or diuretic use, to compensate for the bingeing.
- Often overweight/obese

Link: <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/common-eating-disorders>

How can having an eating disorder affect your life?

Having an eating disorder can cause a lot of emotional imbalances such as feelings of anger, guilt, anxiety, obsessive compulsive behaviours and also fear amongst friends and family. Having an eating disorder is likely to cause low self-esteem issues and bring out insecurities about the way you look. The most dangerous factor of an eating disorder is the physical damage it can cause to your body, e.g. extreme obesity/underweight, thinning of bones, infertility, risk of heart attacks, multi organ failure, and even death.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Summary:

Having a tendency towards excessive orderliness, perfectionism, cleanliness, checking, and a sense of extreme and absolute responsibility. This mental health issue can cause repeated unwanted thoughts, which is often responded to by a form of ritual or routine.

Main types of OCD and symptoms

Checking OCD

- Excessive double-checking of things, such as locks, appliances, and switches. Repeatedly checking in on loved ones to make sure they are safe.
- Counting, tapping, repeating certain words/phrases.
- Constant requests for reassurance from others that they have turned off taps, switches, locked doors, etc.

Contamination/washing OCD

- Repeated/obsessive cleaning and washing Avoidance of public spaces
- Avoidance of touching others in fear of becoming 'contaminated' Seeking reassurance that they have not been 'contaminated'

Rumination OCD

- Constant disturbing and intense thoughts/images
- Fear and anxiety about being a 'bad person' because of the thoughts in their head Avoiding certain places or people to prevent triggering disturbing thoughts
- Spending long periods of time rethinking and going over past events/memories in fear that they have upset, or physically hurt someone

Religious OCD

- Repeating prayer rituals until it 'feels right'
- Fear of doing/thinking something that God would not approve of
- Constantly worrying about praying and whether they are doing it enough or the right way. Having constant thoughts that you think are 'unholy' or offensive to God.

How can OCD affect your life?

Time - You are likely to spend a lot of your time carrying out certain routines. This could lead to being late, or not attending appointments because of lengthy checking/washing/other rituals. You may even repeat routine activities trying to get them exactly right or 'perfect'.

Money - You may begin to spend a lot of unnecessary money on replacing items that do not need replacing because of a fear of contamination. Or excessive amounts of cleaning products.

The ability to have emotional intimacy - You might have such high levels of anxiety that you find it hard to open to others or talk about your OCD. When constantly seeking reassurance from others, being late for things, or expecting others to follow your compulsions, relationships with family members and friends can break down. It is important to talk about your OCD and try to seek the right support.

Bipolar Disorder

Summary:

Bipolar disorder is a mental illness that brings severe high and low moods and changes in sleep, energy, thinking, and behaviour.

Main types of episodes and symptoms

During a period of depression:

- feeling sad, hopeless or irritable most of the time lacking energy difficulty concentrating and remembering things
- loss of interest in everyday activities feelings of emptiness or worthlessness feelings of guilt and despair
- feeling pessimistic about everything self-doubt
- being delusional, hallucinating and disturbed or illogical thinking lack of appetite
- difficulty sleeping waking up early suicidal thoughts

Mania:

- feeling very happy, elated, or overjoyed talking very quickly
- feeling full of energy feeling self-important
- feeling full of great new ideas and having important plans being easily distracted
- being easily irritated or agitated
- being delusional, hallucinating and disturbed or illogical thinking not feeling like sleeping
- not eating doing things that often have disastrous consequences - Such as spending large sums of money on expensive and sometimes unaffordable items making decisions or saying things that are out of character and that others see as being risky or harmful

Patterns of depression and mania:

If you have bipolar disorder, you may have episodes of depression more regularly than episodes of mania, or vice versa. Between episodes of depression and mania, you may sometimes have periods where you have a “normal” mood. The patterns are not always the same and some people may experience:

rapid cycling -where a person with bipolar disorder repeatedly swings from a high to a low phase quickly without having a “normal” period in between.

mixed state - where a person with bipolar disorder experiences symptoms of depression and mania together; for example, over activity with a depressed mood.

How can Bipolar disorder affect your life?

Bipolar disorder is a condition of extremes. A person with bipolar disorder may be unaware they are in the manic phase. After the episode is over, they may be shocked at their behaviour. But at the time, they may believe other people are being negative or unhelpful. Some people with bipolar disorder have more frequent and severe episodes than others. The extreme nature of the condition means staying in a job may be difficult and relationships may become strained. There is also an increased risk of suicide. During episodes of mania and depression, someone with bipolar disorder may experience strange sensations, such as seeing, hearing, or smelling things that are not there (hallucinations).

Link: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/bipolar-disorder/symptoms/>

Post -Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Summary:

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a debilitating anxiety disorder that occurs after experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event.

Main symptoms of PTSD:

- vivid flashbacks (feeling like the trauma is happening right now)
- intrusive thoughts or images
- nightmares
- intense distress at real or symbolic reminders of the trauma
- physical sensations such as pain, sweating, nausea, or trembling
- panicking when reminded of the trauma
- being easily upset or angry
- extreme alertness, also sometimes called 'hypervigilance'
- disturbed sleep or a lack of sleep
- irritability or aggressive behaviour
- finding it hard to concentrate - including on simple or everyday tasks
- being jumpy or easily startled
- self-destructive behaviour or recklessness
- feeling like you must keep busy
- avoiding anything that reminds you of the trauma
- being unable to remember details of what happened
- feeling emotionally numb or cut off from your feelings
- feeling physically numb or detached from your body
- being unable to express affection
- using alcohol or drugs to avoid memories
- feeling like you can't trust anyone
- feeling like nowhere is safe
- feeling like nobody understands
- blaming yourself for what happened
- overwhelming feelings of anger, sadness, guilt or shame

Link: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/>

How can PTSD affect your life?

PTSD can make it very hard to hold down a job and maintain friendships/relationships. It makes it hard to enjoy your leisure time and affects your memory, your decision-making ability, and the way you can cope with change/significant life events.

Suicide Prevention

Facts:

1. 1 in 17 of us has thoughts of suicide in a year 1 in 4 young people have thought of suicide
2. It is believed that 2/3 of suicide attempts are by females 3 in 4 deaths by suicide in the UK are by males
3. Suicide is the main cause of death for young people up to the age of 35 in the UK Suicide has not been a crime in the UK since 1961
4. Signs that a young person may be having suicidal thoughts:

Thoughts:

- “All of my problems will end soon”
- “No one can do anything to help me now” “I won’t be needing these things anymore” “I wish I were dead”
- “I can’t do anything right”
- “Everyone will be better off without me”

Physical:

- Lack of interest in appearance
- Disturbed sleep
- Change/loss of appetite, weight

Physical health complaints - feelings:

- Desperate
- Angry
- Guilty
- Worthless
- Lonely
- Sad
- Hopeless
- Helpless

Actions:

- Giving away possessions
- Withdrawal (family, friends, school, work)
- Loss of interest in hobbies
- Abuse of alcohol, drugs
- Reckless behaviour
- Extreme behaviour changes
- Impulsivity
- Self-harm

What to do

Asking about suicide saves lives but it can be hard to know where to start or how to help. Below are some example conversation starters if you are worried about someone. It can be scary, hard, or painful to talk about suicide - but we need to. Suicidal feelings do not have to end in suicide. Many young people feel really isolated with their thoughts of suicide and do not feel that they are able to tell anyone. Evidence shows that talking about suicide does not make it more likely to happen - it reduces the stigma and is often the first step in a person’s recovery. Talking about suicide does not make it more likely to happen. Suicide is the biggest killer of young people-male and female-under 35 in the UK. We believe that everyone has a role to play in preventing young suicide. We need to work towards a community where suicide is no longer taboo and young people feel able to tell someone if they feel suicidal and ask for help.

1. Ask them directly 'Are you thinking about suicide' by using the word suicide' you are telling the young person that it's OK to talk openly about their thoughts of suicide with you.

"Sometimes, when people are feeling the way you are they think about suicide. Is that what you're thinking about?"

"Are you telling me you want to kill yourself? End your life? Die? Die by suicide?" "It sounds like you're thinking about suicide, is that right?"

"It sounds like life feels too hard for you right now and you want to kill yourself, is that right?"

2. Reassure them that they are not alone, and you can look for support together.

"It's not uncommon to have thoughts of suicide. With help and support many people can work through these thoughts and stay safe."

"There are organisations that offer support like PAPYRUS HOPELINEUK. I can help you find their contact details."

"You've shown a lot of strength in telling me this. I want to help you find support." "There is hope. There is help available and we can find it together"

3. If someone is suicidal listen to them and allow them to express their feelings. They may feel a huge sense of relief that someone is willing to hear their darkest thoughts.

"It sounds as though things are really hard now.... Can you tell me a bit more?" "Things must be so painful for you to feel like there is no way out. I want to listen and help." "Take your time and tell me what's happening for you at the moment."

"I am so sorry you're feeling this way. Can you tell me more about how you are feeling?" "Can you tell me more about why you want to die?"

"What has brought you to this place/to feel this way?"

"It's hard and scary to talk about suicide but take your time and I will listen."

Through empathic listening you will be:

- Acknowledging invitations
- Helping to build trust and respect
- Enabling the speaker to release their emotions
- Reducing tension
- Validating their feelings
- Encouraging the surfacing of information
- Creating a safe environment that is conducive to collaborative problem solving

Managing reactions:

- Reassure them it was the right thing to tell
- Keep calm
- Allow them time to talk and feel understood about how they are feeling and their reasons for wanting to end their life
- Don't try and steer the conversation away from suicide
- Always be open and honest
- Don't be afraid of silence

Taken from the Papyrus Suicide Prevention Training

Organisations that can support

If a young person feels that they may have a mental health issue or are suffering with several symptoms mentioned, encourage them to make an appointment with their GP, and/or signpost them to these websites and organisations:

Mind	A mental health charity who offer support and information to people experiencing a mental health issue.	www.mind.org.uk
Hafal	Wales leading charity offering support to people with a mental health issue and their carers.	www.hafal.org
Platform	An organisation which support and offer projects to young people struggling with mental health issues.	www.platfform.org
The Amber Project	Exists to support any young person (aged 14-25) in Cardiff and the surrounding areas who has experience of self-harm.	www.amberproject.org.uk
Samaritans	There for you to call if you are having a difficult time, struggling to cope, if you're worried about someone else, or having a difficult conversation.	Call 116 123 for free from any phone (24 hours a day 365 days a year) www.samaritans.org
Papyrus	The national charity dedicated to the prevention of young suicide.	www.papyrus-uk.org Call 0800 068 4141 (weekdays 10am-10pm, weekends 2pm-10pm and bank holidays 2pm-10pm)
Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)	If you identify as male.	Call on 0800 58 58 58 (5pm-midnight every day) or use their webchat service.
Switchboard	If you identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender..	Call 0300 330 0630 (10am-10pm every day) Phone operators all identify as LGBT+.
Young minds	The UK's leading charity fighting for children and young people's mental health. We will make sure all young people get the best possible mental health support.	Text 'YM' to 85258 www.youngminds.org.uk
Childline	Is a counselling service for children and young people up to their 19th birthday in the United Kingdom provided by the NSPCC.	Call 0800 1111
Beat	Support eating disorder sufferers and their families and campaign on their behalf for better treatment.	www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk
Cruse Bereavement Care	Here to support you after the death of someone close. They offer a range of free confidential support for adults and children	Call 0808 808 1677 The helpline is open Monday-Friday 9.30-5pm (excluding bank holidays), with extended hours on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, when we're open until 8pm. www.cruse.org.uk
The Mix	Support for young people up to the age of 25, with a various range of struggles and issues.	Call 0808 808 4994 www.themix.org.uk
Rape Crisis	Online emotional support, information and self-help tools for women and girls.	www.rapecrisis.org.uk
MEIC	Helpline service for children and young people up to the age of 25 in Wales	Call 0808 8023 456 TEXT 84001 www.meicymru.org
No Panic	Specialises in self-help recovery. Services include: Providing people with the skills they need to manage their condition and work towards recovery, enabling them to lead more fulfilled lives.	Call 0844 967 4848 10am-10pm www.nopanic.org.uk
Time to Change Wales	National campaign to improve knowledge and understanding about mental illness and to get people talking about mental health in order to improve working people's wellbeing.	www.timetochangewales.org.uk
Heads Above the Waves	Raises awareness of depression and self-harm in young people.	www.hatw.co.uk

Creating a Group Culture

A group culture is the basis of a working group, it sets agreed behaviour from all participants and ensures that everyone is on the same page from the start. The purpose of a group culture is to create an open and respectful environment in which the group can work together creatively, support individuals to feel safe, share their ideas and explore opinions. It is important that the group creates this with the tutor as it gives them control and ensures they understand what is required of the group instead of being “told the rules.” There are many ways to introduce a group culture and this is just one of them. Alternatively, /or in addition too, participants could write their own rules and put them on post it notes, to stick on the flipchart. This would make it more open and anonymous.

AIMS

For the group including the tutor to agree on behaviours, attitudes, communication, time and sensitive issues explored within session.

TIME

10 minutes

RESOURCES

- Flipchart paper
- Markers
- Blue/white tack.

Keep the group culture you have created and re-visit at the beginning of each session.

Example of a group culture

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

- Discuss what behaviours a participant / young person expects from a tutor and others within the session. I.e. use of mobile phones or language
 - Explore basic structure of session including if there are any breaks or any adaptations to session.
 - Explain to the group that they may be talking about sensitive issues and that the group should agree to set some actions to stick to that they will agree to follow throughout the session.
 - Have the group culture on a flipchart where all participants /young people and tutor can easily see, ensuring that all actions are readable. Ask all of the participants if they understand all points or if they need further explanation. This could be an open forum for further discussion if time permits and may allow for participants / young people to answer the question themselves.
 - Once completed put the group culture where everyone can see them throughout the session using blue/white tack to secure to surface if necessary.
 - The group culture can be added to if something unexpected comes up – however, this must be agreed by the group.
 - When someone breaks the group, culture refer them to the group flip chart, some young people may feel this is authorities and therefore there are two further actions:
1. Refer the group to the group culture and remind all participants / young people of the purpose of the session and its group culture.
 2. Have the group to be responsible for group culture and only act if the disruption is taking up too much time.

“don’t judge others
- you don’t know the whole story.”

If you feel triggered and leave the room or just need the toilet - please give a thumbs up or thumbs down so we know if you need help!

“What is said in the group, stays in the group.”

Every 20 minutes we will have a break.

“Be respectful of other’s views.”

DANCING IN A GROUP

AIMS

Young people will:

- Be motivated to dance in a group
- Be taught dance skills that they are able to perform in confidence.
- Focus on the work, while having fun and engaging with others.

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- Have increased confidence
- Feel happy in the way they have expressed themselves
- Have increased dance and theatrical knowledge
- Have enhanced their ensemble and teamwork skills.

ICEBREAKER

Aerobics Icebreaker.

Method:

1. Get the group into a circle.
2. Ask for someone to volunteer to go first, or you as the host can start off the activity. The first person can either go to the center of the circle or else stay where they are, depending on your preference as the host.
3. Ask the person to introduce themselves by their first and last name, but instruct them to make some sort of movement or do an action for each syllable of their name. For example: The name "Jonathan Smith" (Jon-a-than Smith) would require that person to make four distinct movements of their choice.
4. Have each person in the group repeat the person's name while also mimicking the actions they performed.
5. Have the person repeat their name and actions as many times as it takes for most of the group to get it right before moving on to the next participant.
6. The person to the right of the one making the introduction should go next until all participants have introduced themselves with a name and simultaneous actions.

(Optional): After everyone has introduced themselves, quickly go through the group members from the first person again to make sure everyone remembers the names of the others.

RESOURCES

- Music Player
- Torch
- Balloons
- Space Spots
- Ball, Ribbon
- Chair
- Hula hoop
- Beanbag

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

Week 1 & 2

- Warm up: Choose a song from a well know film i.e Frozen, get the young people to move as if they are a character from the film. Does the character make big or small movements, are they loud or quiet?
- Get the young people in pairs. Take it in turns to be the 'lead' the partner has to mirror the movements of the 'lead'. Swap over to ensure both get a turn.
- Now it is your turn! Get the group to mirror your actions. Combine them together to make a sequence. Once everyone knows the moves, turn the music on and complete the routine to music - extra tip: change the song, see how the speed of movements change as the speed or type of music played is changed. Each week you can add on movements to form a dance.
- Cool down: Get the young people into a circle, go round the circle taking it in turns to do an action i.e stretching over toes, doing a star jump. The whole circle should copy the movements once demonstrated.

Week 3

- Warm up: Split the group into smaller groups of 4-5. Select one young person to hold the spotlight and another one to work on the music. The one with the spotlight should be made to stand in the middle of the dance floor.
- As the music starts the dancers should start dancing, and the person holding the spotlight should shine the torch on the dancers one by one.
- The one that controls the music can stop it at any point.
- When the music stops, the young person with the spotlight should freeze and hold the light on the dancer it was on when the music stopped. The dancer with the spotlight on will be considered out.
- The game continues until one dancer is left.
- Mirror Dance: Continue to practice your group 'mirror dance' encourage different young people to come to the front and lead the group to add new movements.
- Cool down: Get the dancers to spread out on the dance floor, hand out a blown-up balloon to each young person. The dancers need to juggle the balloons while they dance to the music. The balloon should not fall on the floor until the music stops, if it does the dancer is out. The one who stays longest on the dance floor juggling the balloons will be the winner.

Week 4

- Warm up: Line up the dancers in a row. One young person is given the ball first, He or she dances to the music with the ball and passes it on to the next dancer when the timer beeps. The next person will continue that dance and perform for a set time. After passing the ball, the dancer will move out of the row to give others a chance. It encourages the participation of each young person.
- Mirror Dance; continue to develop your group mirror dance.
- Cool down in a circle stretching over toes and side to side

Week 5

- Warm up: This game makes space for not adding some groovy dance moves but also improves their cognitive ability. One person starts a dance step, and passes it on to the person next to her. The next person then adds a step of his own to the previous step and passes this combined step to the next person. This goes on and can be made more fun by dancing to the routine created as a result. The group have to participate by relying on their memories, and it is best to let young people limit themselves to simple steps to include everyone
- Creatively exploring physicality of the hare and the tortoise around the space (freeze, balance, levels) The facilitator shouts out 'hare' or 'tortoise', the young people must move around the space moving like the animal. Switch up the speed you shout out the animal names. At the end of the activity ask the group what if any difference in the

movements they made when acting like different animals.

- Tortoise and The Hare Dance: take movements from the previous activity to create a sequence of movements for the group to do. Maybe split the group in half and get the 'hares' to perform their dance to the 'tortoises' and vis versa at the end of the session.

Week 6

- Warm up: Play clips of different types of music, some slow, some fast. Encourage the group to move/dance to the music. This dancing game allows individuals to identify the theme of the music, and the emotions they feel while doing so. The dancing to the music thus exhibits the emotions they feel while listening to it - if it is a happy song, they can dance by bouncing and if the music is calm and even sad, they can dance by swaying instead. This game makes them think and not move mechanically, allowing them to develop well cognitive and emotional abilities, and reacting to them by exhibiting certain body movements.
- Obstacle course activity: lay out different obstacles around the room. i.e a bench to walk along, bean bags to juggle, a hula hoop, hopscotch etc. Encourage the group to take it in turns to complete the course. Once everyone has had a go, split into two groups and have a race of which team can complete the course in the quickest time.
- Tortoise and The Hare Dance: continue to develop the dance from last week. Add music and props.
- Cool down with slow controlled stretches like a tortoise



GUITAR SESSIONS

AIMS

Young people will:

- Be motivated to learn basic guitar skills
- Learn a few songs that they are able to perform on a guitar in confidence.
- Focus on the work, while having fun and engaging with others.

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- Have increased confidence
- Have increased musical knowledge
- Be able to play different chords and use strumming techniques
- Be able to play at least one full song

ICEBREAKER

Introduction Icebreaker.

Method:

1. Get the group to sit in a circle.
2. Facilitator to ask for everyone to introduce themselves; name, pronouns and their favourite song.
3. If time allows maybe make a Spotify playlist of everyone's choices, which can be played during breaks/ at the end of the session.
4. It is important for everyone in the group to get to know a little about each other in order to engage.

RESOURCES

- Guitar
- Music Sheets
- Guitar pick

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

1. Introduce yourselves and explain what will be happening in today's session.
2. Teach the young people about the guitar; its parts and the names of the strings to help them to remember.
3. After they have learned their way around the guitar, they can then learn basic chords to get them started.
4. After a few sessions of learning chords, they can begin to learn a simple song. One song that was simple and easy to use was the James Bond theme song.
5. Through practicing chords every session their confidence on the guitar will begin to increase.
6. After practicing and mastering one song they can then begin to move further up the ladder to a more advanced song. One example of a song that the young people played was 'Seven Nation Army' and 'Castle on the Hill' by Ed Sheeran.
7. In order for the young people not to forget, each session they would always go through their chords as well as new ones as they are important for every song played on the guitar.
8. The young people need to keep practicing to increase their confidence on the guitar. By doing this they will be able to play a full song confidently in front of peers.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Start off with simple chords and techniques. Playing a new instrument can sometime be overwhelming for some young people.
- Have patience with the groups and make sure all young people understand.
- If it is a bigger group of young people, make sure each young person gets a chance to show what they have learned.
- If necessary, print off the sheet music for young people to make it easier for them



OPEN MIC NIGHT

AIMS

Young people will:

- Develop the skills to plan events
- Increase their performance skills
- Develop their confidence
- Increase their self-worth and positive mental health

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- Have increased organisation, communication, and teamwork skills.
- Develop their performance skills
- Improve their mental health and self-confidence.

RESOURCES

- Room
- Writing material
- Access to computers for promotion
- Venue for event
- Microphone
- Sound system
- Chairs
- Tables
- Refreshments.

ICEBREAKER

Singing Superstars Icebreaker.

Method:

1. Group to stand/sit in a circle.
2. Each young person in the group is encouraged to think of a singing superhero either that they admire or they think is worthy of the title.
3. Leader to pick and play a tune/nursery rhyme.
4. The young people and staff should take it in turns to stand up and do a pose how their superstar would stand e.g. Elvis/Madonna/Ed Sheeran/Pink/Sam Smith/Shirley Bassey/Nina Simone
5. Then they have to sing the song/nursery rhyme how that artist would – encourage them to perform the song all together to begin with.
6. Move around the circle until everyone has had a go.

Variations:

One person sings in their chosen persons song and everyone else sings the same person and we go around the circle. You could also have duets with 2 different artists. This will develop as confidence grows.



RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

Session 1

1. Show appropriate video clips of open mic nights from YouTube to group.
2. Ask the group what they liked/disliked about each clip. i.e. was the performances inside or outside, was there a MC introducing the acts? Make a list of everything they would like to include in their own open mic night. Split these wants into tasks and assign them to different teams.
3. Young people should then split into groups to take on different elements of the event, i.e. social media promotion team, advertisement team, venue and stage team. The facilitator can go round these groups and help them create a to do list for their team from the original wants list, i.e. do they need to do a risk assessment, do they need to create a social media page, do they need to visit different venues? etc.
4. For the rest of the session the young people have time to practice their singing – this is important to do in each session as it builds confidence and gets people used to the equipment and singing in front of people.

Session 2

1. Encourage each team to feed back to the whole group what they discussed last session and share their to do list.
2. Young people then split back into their groups to work through their to do list. i.e. advertisement team can create a poster for event, social media team can begin to follow people they might want to promote to, venue team to book venue this could be youth club, or local café etc. Encourage young people also to take away tasks with them to complete before next session.
3. The young people then have time to practice singing and using equipment – also time to look at songs they could suggest for peers.

Session 3

1. Encourage each group to give an update on planning and organising events. Split the group and complete tasks like risk assessments (remember to include in poster age appropriate content only for reading), what needs to be bought, are they having refreshments (if in youth club), who do they want to invite? If there is a theme?
2. Encourage young people to work on their own singing or work or as a group. If you have decided on a theme, then this could be an opportunity to discuss the theme

Session 4

1. Encourage groups to discuss progress and any final arrangements to do. Look at what the group need to do before the event and times to turn up to set up. Discuss the final promotion techniques to promote the event and how to get the maximum audience.
2. Remember! Young people need to confirm running order and confirm who is doing what and replace anyone who may have dropped out.

3. Prior to the event decide who is going to tweet and put things on social media. Decide who is going to greet people.
4. Young people can now work on their singing and have a mini run through with the facilitator providing feedback on their performance in order to get the best performance from the young person.

Session 5 – THE OPEN MIC NIGHT

1. Young people should meet before the event to set everything up and finalise any arrangements needed.
2. Young people should greet people and run the show. The young people should also be supporting other people singing and youth workers to support young people throughout. Offer the option of a Karaoke version if people are nervous to sing without words. Alternate prepared performances with young people wanting to have a go. Encourage the staff to sing as a group to break down barriers.
3. Young people to tidy up following event

Session 6 – EVALUATION

1. Encourage young people to reflect on the event. Show the photos/videos and any positive comments from social media.
2. Hold a session to ask questions for the group: What worked? What could be improved? What would you do again? What would you not do again? What could you add to the event? What did you as an individual get from it? What did you learn? What was the feedback from the attendees/audience? What next?
3. This could be done as a whole group or smaller groups or individuals. Make sure that all comments are written down or videoed for evidence.
4. Finally have a show reel of the young people's performances.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Have a WhatsApp group chat to keep everyone informed.
- Take contact numbers to be able to phone if needed.
- Promote in advance and speak to people in the community to advertise event.
- Get the young people to decide the time of when to run the sessions - how often do they need to meet to ensure everything is done?
- Have plenty of refreshments within sessions and at the event.
- Encourage young people reflect of each other's work and provide support if needed.
- Have a reflection at the end of each session on all the good work.
- For those who do not sing – give them roles that will increase their confidence. Such as sound assistant, stagehand, costume designer etc.
- When the young people are confident enough it may be worth going to a venue where there is open mic as a group.

SUPPORTING A COMMUNITY EVENT

– ACTIVITY STALL

AIMS

Young people will:

- Increase their event management skills
- Take an important role in providing activities in the community
- Peer educates
- Have an increased sense of purpose and self-worth

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- learn how to organise an activity stall
- learn how to communicate with an organisation
- learn that volunteering helps with a sense of purpose and wellbeing within themselves
- feel empowered and positive about their good work.
- link arts and culture to positive mental health.

The community will:

- learn new skills and develop positive relationships with young people.

ICEBREAKER

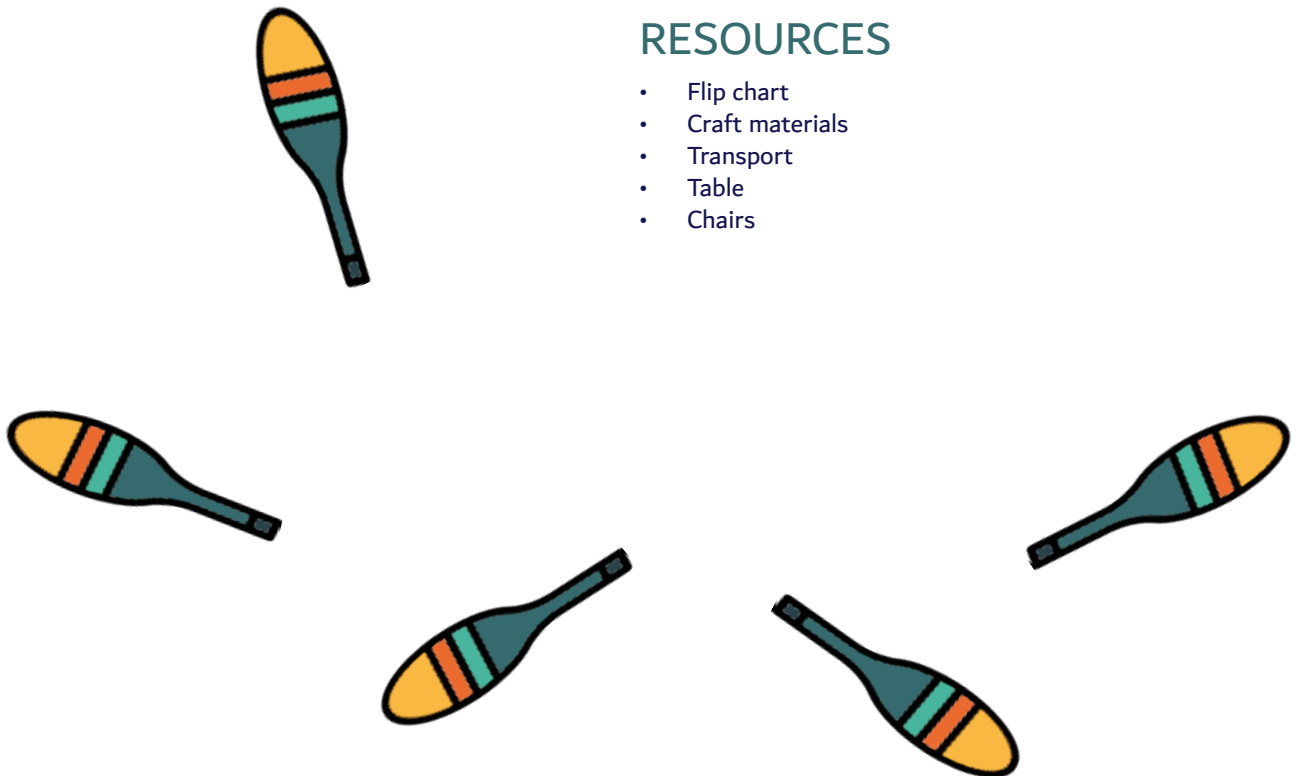
What makes me feel good?

Method:

1. Get everyone to sit in a circle on chairs with one person standing in the middle. You could start with the facilitator if no one volunteers.
2. The group asks the person standing what makes you feel good? The person in the middle answers with one answer e.g. playing music/sport/watching TV programme/buying nice clothes/making something/talking to someone etc.
3. Everyone who agrees with this statement e.g. “dancing” must get up and run to a different empty chair of someone who also stood up.
4. The person in the middle tries to get to an empty chair too.
5. The person left without sitting on a chair moves to the centre on the circle and will be asked the same question.
6. The whole process is repeated until everyone that feels comfortable has had a turn in the middle.
7. This allows young people to see commonality and differences in a safe space. Discuss how feeling good means different things to different people and how the project aims to ensure the feeling good in the community is a theme around mental health and activities.

RESOURCES

- Flip chart
- Craft materials
- Transport
- Table
- Chairs



RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

Session 1

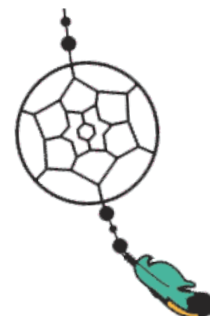
1. Explain to the group what the community event, give examples of past events and how young people can be involved with volunteering on the day by having an activity stall.
2. Hold a mind mapping session where the young people come up with their dream activity stall the more surreal and exciting the better.
3. Young people choose activities that are relevant to the event, try to ensure the activity has a positive effect on mental health and wellbeing through arts and crafts, games, music, drama etc. different events will call for different things.
4. Young people choose responsibilities leading up to the event on how they will collect material and try the workshops out within their peer groups.



Here are examples of ideas for activities that have worked		
Dream catchers	Friendship bracelets	Hat making/decorating
Colouring corner	Painting	Graffiti board
Film making	Drum making	Jewellery making
Nail painting	Banner making	T-shirt painting
Up-cycling	Glass painting	Ukulele workshop
Drama games	Selfie stand	Sock puppets
Mood board	Consultation work	Quiz
Silly dances	Circus skills	Tile painting
Plant pot painting	Giant board games	Traditional games

Sessions 2 and 3

1. Young people work on how they will deliver the session
2. Encourage young people to practice the activity with the group and create examples of the chosen activities for display on the day.
3. Ensure the group create signs and time boards of when the activities will take place and gather all the materials.
4. Promote the table on social media and posters for the schools and community centres.
5. On the final session agree time and meeting point and who will bring what to the event.



The Community Event

1. Setting up – encourage all young people look at their plan and help to set up (help other groups as well if they need it)
2. The young people will work together and organise themselves into shifts to give everyone time to take part in the event.
3. Ensure young people work with the community to deliver the chosen workshops. If the young people are confident, they can help on other stalls. The young people will take photos of activities for their portfolio of evidence.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Have some snacks and drinks handy for the community day for the young people as the day can be long and they sometimes get de-motivated.
- Always have back up activities for the day as you may run out of material for the workshops

Final session (evaluation)

Work with the group evaluating what worked and what could be made better. This can be done with discussion/post-it notes/online tool/individual/group/games/feedback forms from the public.

DESIGN YOUR OWN FESTIVAL



AIMS

Young people will:

- Use their imagination and express themselves
- Have increased happiness
- Be given the chance to focus on something positive in a fun, safe environment

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- Have increased confidence
- Have increased planning skills.
- Have increased group working skills.
- Feel happy in the way they have expressed themselves
- Will have enhanced their communication skills.
- Have knowledge on what is needed for a professional festival

ICEBREAKER

Introduction Icebreaker.

Method:

1. Get the group to sit in a circle.
2. Facilitator to ask for everyone to introduce themselves; name, pronouns and their favourite song.
3. If time allows maybe make a Spotify playlist of everyone's choices, which can be played during breaks/ at the end of the session.
4. It is important for everyone in the group to get to know a little about each other in order to engage.

RESOURCES

- Flip chart paper
- Pens
- Access to internet for examples

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

1. Sit down with young people at a round table and discuss what a festival is. Write thoughts down on flipchart page so everyone can see.
2. Ensure to incorporate different types of festivals from music to food, dance and education etc.
3. Encourage the young people to use flip chart and pens to mind map ideas on what they would like to do. They can either work on their own, in pairs or groups.
4. Ask young people to research health and safety needs at festivals. Plan additional sessions to run first aid, risk assessment training with volunteers.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Have patience with the groups and make sure all young people understand the activity. Sometimes they could be confused for a lot of different reasons.
- Observe the young people's body language.
- Take your time explaining why you need to do things in certain ways
- Feel free to use examples if young people are stuck for ideas.

GOING TO THE THEATRE

AIMS

Young people will:

- Develop their confidence
- Become motivated and empowered
- Learn about how drama can be used as a tool to help them overcome mental health barriers
- Observe performers and how learn more about how to act on stage

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- Develop a wide range of skills and knowledge from the sessions as they will verbally critique the performers and this will start their development process of being a performer.
- Develop increased confidence not only within their performances, but also within their own personal life.
- Develop their musical knowledge by electively listening to a vast variety of genres of music and trying out new styles.
- Developed their teamwork skills by listening to each other and empowering each other to make alternative song choices which suit their voices.

ICEBREAKER

Pre-Theatre Icebreaker.

Method:

1. The young people will have a chat about the different performances that they are going to see and discuss in great detail about the performances that have already seen.
2. During this time the young people will review and explore how they would change or keep certain as characteristics of the performance. This is part of their personal development of becoming a performer.
3. As part of the ice breaker they can get to perform a scene they have already scene from a show, televisions or film. This allows the young people to expand their rupture of performing.

RESOURCES

- Flipchart
- Pens
- Mobile Phones/computer



RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

1. In a large group encourage young people to talk about what shows they have seen coming up and what they would like to go and watch. List some of these ideas down on flipchart
2. Research the cost of the shows and your budget, as well as looking into the running times
3. Encourage young people to research, learn the history of the show and the genre.
4. Plan a visit, booking the tickets and making travel arrangements to and from the show
5. Discuss and review the show and the performances of the actors
6. Plan their own performances and include what they have learned from the show.

HELPFUL TIPS

The bigger the group the more the young people can team up to explore different options and alternative theatre products as many of the young people will require alternative taste in genres in performances.

CREATIVE CALMING CRAFTS

- MASK MAKING

AIMS

Young people will:

- Utilise crafts to increase positive mental health
- Increase their self-awareness
- Express themselves through art

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- Have created a mask each by the end of the session
- Discuss their own masks and explore how this makes them feel.
- Work on coping strategies around mental health in a safe environment
- Tell a story about their mask to the group.
- Create a 5-minute interactive performance in small groups.

ICEBREAKER

Faces Icebreaker.

Method:

1. Ask young people to get into circle and ask them to copy the leader – the leader says an emotion or a typical person e.g. Happy/sad/anguish/shocked/old/young/baby/delinquent/bossy/moody/dreamy etc.
2. They pull the face that relates to the word and the others in the circle copy. They then stand in the physical position that they think that character should look whilst keeping the facial expression. The group then can speak a sentence in that character without moving their face – e.g. “what a lovely/horrible day” or “my name is...” etc.
3. This work can develop to the group walking around the space and either the leader shouts an emotion/person out or give the young people pieces of paper for the young people to use physical theatre and psychological gesture to express the character.
4. The workshop could develop further with the young people creating a whole persona with movement and facial gestures for a character. Discuss how people use psychological gestures every day to cover how they are feeling to the world. As the question how does it feel to be in an unnatural movement and face expression? How could this affect your mood? Yours/others’ lives?

RESOURCES

- Templates of masks
- Art supplies for decoration
- Music.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

1. Discuss masks with the group – a brief history of where they originate and how they have been used in theatre. Discuss how people wear a mask every day even to themselves in order to get through the day. Explore how this affects society and the individual. Look at both the positives and the negatives and how this can change in situations.
2. Young people should look at how they want to represent themselves through the mask. They can either choose from a template (lots of choice online) or create their own mask from scratch.
3. Ask young people to decorate and paint their masks how they want and encourage them to be as creative as possible.
4. Young people should then tell a story about their mask to the group and create a character for the mask.
5. Go back to the icebreaker and ask young people to act out gestures and physicality for the mask.
6. You could also work on creating a piece of theatre around mental health and social impact of wearing a mask.

HELPFUL TIPS

When working with the young people you need to make sure the young people are aware that it is a safe space to discuss things – some issues may arise and then you can sign post the young people to organisations that help. Give the young people space if they need to walk away from the situation. If you are working with a larger group try and have more workers, ideally a smaller group is better (max 10).



LYRIC WRITING

AIMS

Young people will:

- Use their imagination.
- Develop creativity skills
- Express themselves through music and creative writing in a safe space

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- Have increased confidence
- Have increased group working skills.
- Feel happy in the way they have expressed themselves
- Have enhanced their communication skills.
- Have increased creative writing skills.

RESOURCES

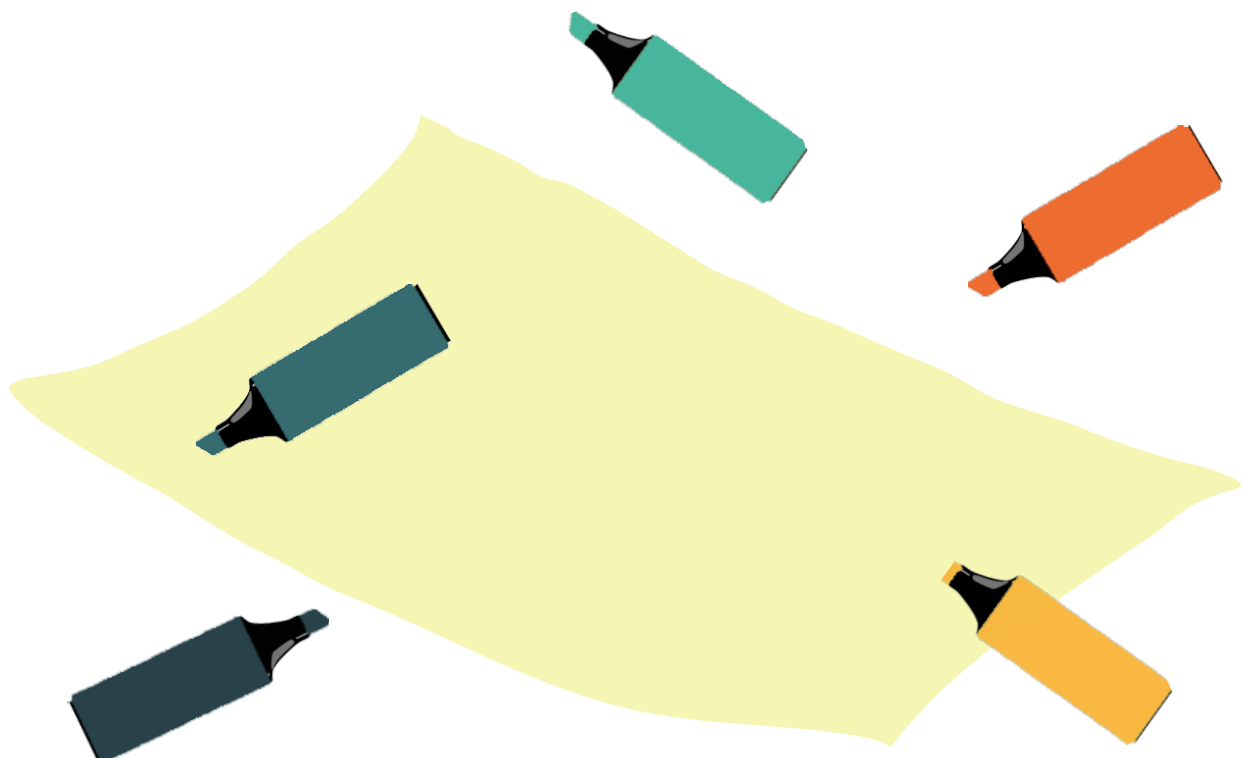
- Flipchart paper
- Pens
- Loudspeaker
- Pre-made beat/music

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

1. Ask young people to sit around the table and get a volunteer to scribe. Divide the flipchart paper into 2 squares: emotions and hobbies.
2. The young people will write down all the different feelings and hobbies they know of. After that, the group then will be split into 2 groups, one taking emotions and the other hobbies.
3. For each group, the young people will be asked to write down words that rhyme with the words they came up with in the initial group.
4. After completing that task, the groups will come back together and the youth worker will help put words together to shape sentences with the young people. The young people can then either rap the finished product to the beat or come up with their own melodies.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Have patience with the groups and make sure all young people understand the activity. Sometimes they could be confused for a lot of different reasons.
- Observe the young people's body language.
- Feel free to use examples if young people are stuck for ideas.
- Play the music in the background for inspiration



BASIC VIDEO MAKING

AIMS

Young people will:

- Develop their creativity skills
- Develop their technology skills.
- Focus on nature and performance to increase their mental health.

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- Have increased confidence
- Have increased focus.
- Gain knowledge on how to use the tools they already have.
- Have ownership over a finished product.
- Have enhanced their communication skills.

RESOURCES

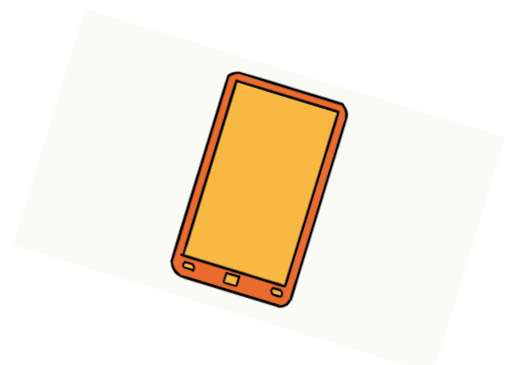
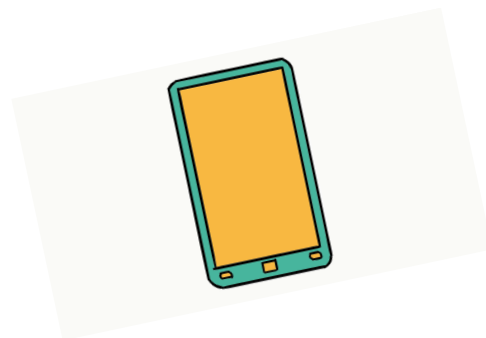
- Mobile phone
- Laptop/pc

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

1. Sit down with the young person to explain the process and write an action plan for the individual.
2. Research and teach the young person how to use a mobile phone to film, how to connect mobile phone to the computer, and how to upload files.
3. Look online with the young person at some tutorial videos on how to edit footage using iMovie.
4. Write a plan with the young person and brainstorm, what do they want to capture? A music video, scenes of nature, etc.
5. The young person can either go out to shoot footage alone, with friends or with the youth worker.
6. Once the footage is captured, the youth worker will show the young person how to upload and edit the video using iMovie. The young person can then upload and edit the video, then export it to either their phone, online or a DVD.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Have patience with the young people and make sure all young people understand the activity. Sometimes they could be confused for a lot of different reasons.
- Keep the action plan updated and have follow up meetings with the young person to see how they are getting on.
- If you're going out to shoot footage with young person, make sure there is always somebody on call who knows your location for safeguarding and lone working policies.



DRUM LESSON FOR BEGINNERS

AIMS

Young people will:

- Be encouraged to be more physically active through playing the drums
- Be able to perform a drum beat with confidence.
- Focus on the work, while having fun and engaging with others.

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- Have increased confidence
- Feel happy in the way they have expressed themselves
- Have increased musical knowledge
- Have enhanced their ensemble and teamwork skills.

ICEBREAKER

1-2-1 Icebreaker.

Method:

1. Have a conversation with the young person, asking them about their interests, share your interests with them also, so you are able to build a relationship.
2. Ask the young person what kind of things they want to get out of the drum sessions and what they want to learn.
3. Ask the young person if they have any worries or concerns for the sessions and work together to make a plan so they are able to overcome these fears.

RESOURCES

- Drum kit
- Electric guitar
- Computer
- Loud speaker

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

1. Sit the young person at the drums and introduce the names of each drum to the young person along with its purpose.
2. Get the young person to practice to a click track, playing single hits on the hi-hat to match the speed of the clicking, or the music for 15-20 minutes.
3. If you can, begin to play the guitar (e.g. a simple 3 – chord sequence) for the young person so that they have something to play along to. This way, the young person will have the opportunity to have a real feel for what it is like to play in a band, resulting in increasing their confidence and happiness.
4. At the end of the session, for approximately 5 – 10 minutes, a short reflection will take place between the worker and the young person on how the session went, what the young person thinks, feels and if they enjoyed the session.

HELPFUL TIPS

- This session is for beginners
- Encourage young people to practise what they have learned in the session at home, even if they do not have a drum kit, they can practise on a strong cushion or pillow.



MEDITATION

AIMS

Young people will:

- Learn some simple meditation techniques
- Start trying to overcome negative thoughts
- Relax and take moments to themselves in a safe space
- Decrease their stress levels and improve mental health

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- Learn about relaxation techniques
- Start to embed simple meditation into their daily lives to improve their wellbeing
- Have increased self-awareness
- Have increased feelings of happiness

RESOURCES

- A big space

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

1. Ask young people to find a space in the room and turn off their mobile phones or switch on silent.
2. Place some relaxing music on the background, maybe sounds of the waves, dolphin or whales.
3. Ask young people to either sit on the floor with their legs crossed or sit in a straight back chair with their feet firmly on the floor.
4. Encourage young people to take in long deep slow breathes, breathing in and then breathing out
5. Ask the young people to visualise any relaxing scenery that they can imagine
6. Encourage young people to do this for 20 minutes.

HELPFUL TIPS

- If people cannot do the meditations straight away, tell them not to give up as not many people cannot go straight into meditations straight away.
- Some of the young people will find it difficult to concentrate at the beginning so doing shorter meditations of 10 minutes will help them to concentrate and begin to get into the flow of the sessions easily.



ONE TO ONE SUPPORT

AIMS

Young people will:

- Be supported with their issues.
- Feel safe and have a sense of belonging.
- Be able to trust someone who really wants to help them.
- Be encouraged to self-reflect and undertake self-care

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- Have increased confidence
- Feel happy in the way they have expressed themselves
- Have a more positive outlook on life.
- Get the support that they need from signposting.

RESOURCES

- Safe and confidential environment
- Notepad.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

1. Make sure you are prepared for the session with organisations you can signpost young people to, also make sure you are aware of your organisations safeguarding and confidentiality policy before you begin.
2. Explain to the young person that everything talked about during the session is going to stay between the 2 of you unless there is a safeguarding issue that needs to be reported to the Safeguarding Officer of the organisation in order to give the right support.
3. Ask young people questions about how they are feeling and allow them to talk about whatever they like. They could talk about things they are enjoying in life at the moment, and/or things that may be worrying them.
4. Use active listening techniques in the session and do not ask leading questions. Ask the young person open questions such as 'how did you feel about that' or 'why do you think that' etc.
5. After the hour session is up, or the young person wants to end the conversation, make sure you reflect on what you spoke about and any actions you will take to improve any difficult situations, e.g. doing some research on a topic, trying to get involved in more sessions, or being referred to another organization for support. Try and use language like "we" so that they young person knows you are there to guide them and they are not on their own.
6. Book in another session with the young person and try and set some simple targets that you can reflect on in the next session.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Having completed Level 2 or 3 Youth Work Practice is beneficial.
- Understanding boundaries.
- Be sure to explain to young person that everything being talked about is confidential however, it is the worker's duty to record and report any safeguarding issues to the organisation's Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Officer in order to support them.



DRAMA WORKSHOP

- MENTAL HEALTH AND ME

AIMS

Young people will:

- Explore the theme of mental health through physical theatre
- Increase their self-awareness and creativity skills.

OUTCOMES

Young people will:

- Learn more about devising theatre
- Explore how physical theatre can impact emotions and feelings
- Develop their performance skills
- Boost their self-confidence and self-awareness

ICEBREAKER

Emotions Icebreaker.

Method:

1. Encourage everyone to stand in a circle and ask one young person to choose an emotion, and a gesture that they feel is suitable for the emotion (e.g. excited – jumps in the air and claps hands repeatedly, stressed – head pointing to floor and shoulders down, stressed – biting their nails, etc).
2. They act it and then the whole group should copy them.
3. Each person will have a go of their own chosen emotion and as each person has taken their turn the rest of the group copy.
4. At the end, go through the whole group really quickly and add more drama to make it fun.

RESOURCES

- Room
- Paper with different emotions written on them.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

1. Get the group to walk around the space being mindful of how they walk. How they hold themselves and how fast they walk.
2. The instructor then says to the group to move their feet to the sound of the clap of hands. They clap their hands slowly and the group take one step with each clap. As a leader you can really challenge the group with different rhythms and speeds. This will enhance listening and awareness.

3. Following this, ask the group to walk around the space and then say you are going to get them to lead their walk with a certain part of their body. For example, if you say nose the young people have to walk around the space with their nose in front of them. Examples: hand, foot, knees, belly, lips, hips, back, chest, shoulder, elbow etc. This allows the young people to be aware of how someone can create a new character through using different parts of their body to lead their walk.
4. Split the groups into pairs
5. One of the young people will be given an emotion on a piece of paper and act it to their partner (sad, happy, thoughtful etc.) and the second person is to react to the emotion displayed as to what feels natural to them. This will be done without speaking. Then swap over. You can do the same and ask them to speak. This demonstrates that acting is reacting to a situation and also explores emotion.
6. Ask the young people to form an audience, and ask some pairs to volunteer to demonstrate what they did to the group (if they feel comfortable)
7. Explain to the group that how a person holds themselves can really affect how one feels inside. If someone stands tall, they can portray strength and confidence and if someone sits hunched in a ball this can affect how they feel inside.
8. Get the group into small groups and ask them to create a 5 minute performance that can be verbal/non-verbal/dance/still/movement/song something that they feel that is relevant to the title “mental health and me”. It can be positive/negative/thought provoking – but it has to be the young people’s representation.
9. Ask the young people to form an audience, and ask some groups to volunteer to demonstrate their work to the rest of the group (if comfortable to do so)
10. Start a discussion about the work and how the rest of the group feel about that performance and what was good about the performance.

HELPFUL TIPS

This can be adapted to giving scripts, lines they must include, individual performance, paired performance. The session could include more games and workshops. It could be developed into writing a longer performance to show at an event.

Creative Evaluation Ideas

Twitter Board

In this activity, participants respond to a prompt in 140 characters or less. This character limit forces them to be concise and to highlight their most pressing concerns.

If participants struggle with writing, they could use emojis or memes instead. Remember to leave time to discuss why they chose the images and what they represent. Answers can be recorded or noted down by facilitator.

Are We On Target?

In this activity, the facilitator draws a large target on a whiteboard or large piece of paper. This target, shaped like a bullseye, represents a part of the session which needs feedback. Participants place sticky notes in the area on the bullseye that corresponds with their thoughts on the session/engagement etc, with areas closer to the centre being more on target.

Peer Quizzes

Peer quizzes are a fairly simple way to gauge participants' understanding of a subject. Participants write quizzes, trade with partners and complete the quizzes they are given. Reading participants' answers shows the facilitator how well they understand the subject of the quiz, and reading the questions they write shows how they think about the subject and which aspects and issues they consider most important.

Talk It Out

This is a form of role playing where one participant is assigned the role of talk show host and others are the guests. The host (or potentially a panel of hosts) writes relevant questions and then interviews the guests, prompting group discussions and allowing participants to discuss their thoughts in an open, nonargumentative environment.

Get creative; what is the show called, do the guests need funny names or costumes? The more fun the evaluation is the more feedback young people are likely to give.

Roll the Dice

Each participant is given dice, and each number on the dice is assigned to a question, such as:

- What did you learn from today?
- About what are you unsure about?

The participants then roll the dice and answer the corresponding questions aloud, prompting group discussions.

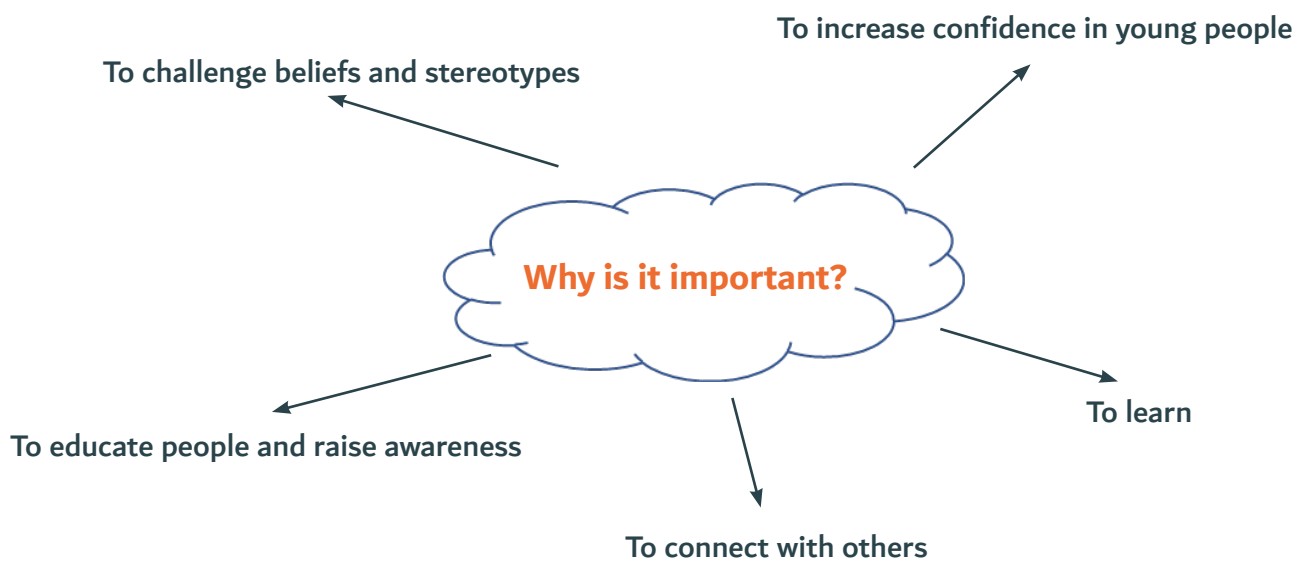
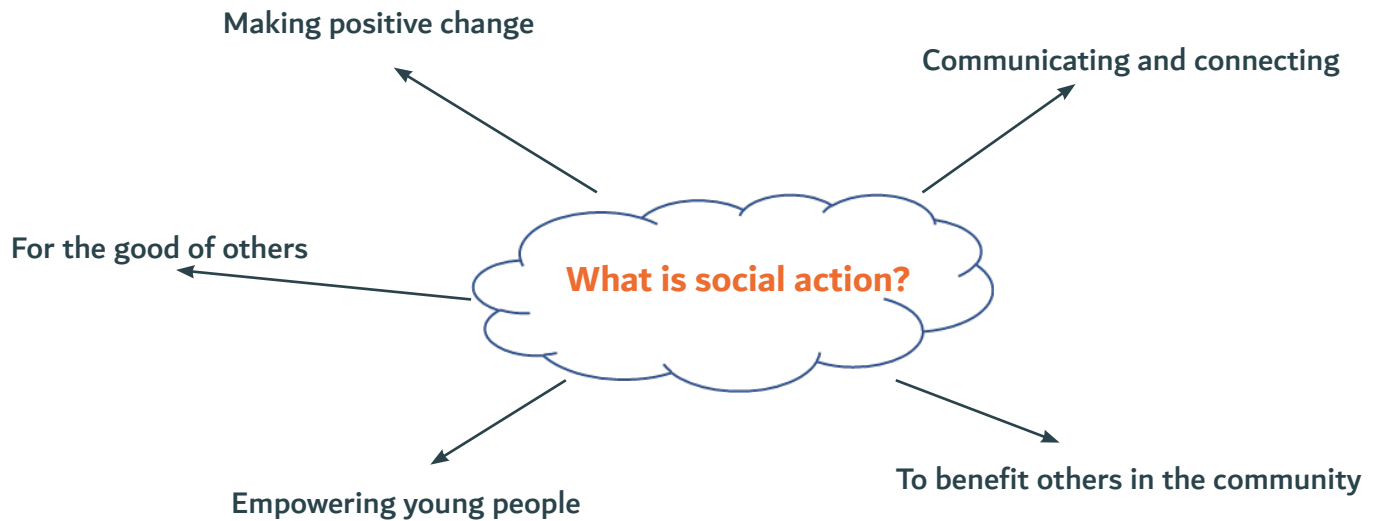
Have a pre-game meeting with the young people. Let them suggest what each question should be so they will have ownership over the 'game'/evaluation and will want to take part.

Complete the Sentence

With this activity, participants are given open-ended sentences to which they respond with their thoughts and assessments. These sentences can be on paper, spoken aloud or written on a white board/flip card in a conference room. Example sentences include:

- I learnt...
- My biggest achievement...
- If I could change two things about the session, they would be:

Social Action



How to run a successful Social Action Project

It is good to look at Social Action in this way:

“Making a difference to benefit your community, or the people around you”

You can look at it like harvesting:

Preparing the ground

It is firstly important to identify the issues in your community, and what needs to be changed. You can then think about how you will be able to change this, and gather together the resources you will need. During this period it will be useful to create team roles, decide on targets you want to reach and create a project timeline so you know how long your project will run for and the amount of time you have to reach your targets.

Planting the seed

It is very important to make connections with different groups of people to get others involved in your project. This way your message will spread and the change you are trying to make will have a bigger impact. You can also network with others through social media, attending sessions that similar groups are running, creating a website or project page, and interacting with others in the community. This will take your project forward on a bigger scale and you can be sure that people are following the cause. At this point you can also be thinking about opportunities to showcase your work- is there an event coming up in your area, or can you create your own event to display how your project has benefitted others?

Tending the crops

Throughout the project, it is very important to monitor the progress of people involved. If you are helping young people then you need to make sure you can capture how you are helping them! You could get them to write about their experience and put it in a report, or you can be creative and capture videos, quotes and photographs.

Reaping the harvest

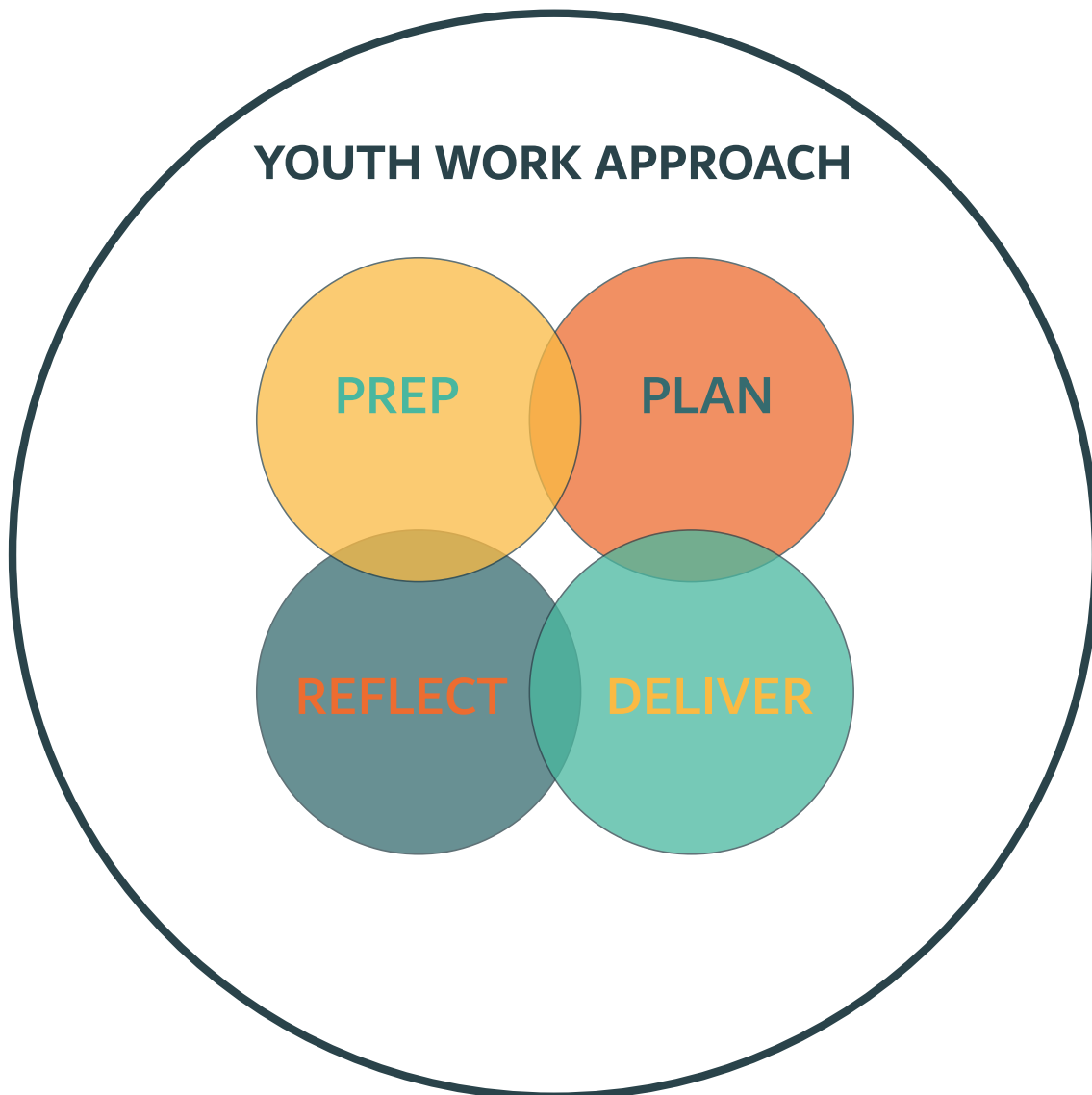
At the end of your Social Action Project you need to make sure that every person who was involved was clear about the purpose of the project and knows that they can now spread the message too! Train them up to run their own social action project or become champions of the cause. Hold or attend an event where people can showcase and celebrate the great work they have done to benefit the community. Make sure you reflect on what went well throughout the project, and what could have been done differently so that you know what to improve on if you run another social action project in the future!

Running a project

Ways to make your Social Action Project a success

It is essential to note that no two youth creative arts projects are the same, so you must be flexible and creative. Ensuring that the project is fluid will help young people, who are at different levels, adapt and work together harmoniously. Too much restriction will make it harder to engage everyone in the group. Changing to suit a young person's needs can be hugely beneficial in energizing the group dynamic.

Make sure you always remember to use the core values of youth work when running a project; listening, valuing, trusting and guiding will prevail over telling and dictating.



Four non-linear stages

As you can see, some of the stages may overlap and bleed into each other. Embrace the organic nature of what you are working on - the organic elements of these projects normally turn out to be the most effective.

For example, just because a new concept is talked about as you are moving into the delivery stage, it doesn't mean it shouldn't be included. Naturally, any constructive feedback that comes out of the reflecting and evaluating stage should feed directly into future prep & planning.

Below are some guidelines about what should be featured in each stage:

Top Tip

Your journey from beginning to completion might look a bit like the shape of a treble clef. You will have a pre-determined start point and end point, but the in between bits may overlap, go back on themselves, and turn sharp corners. This is okay - remember to keep your objectives in mind but also allow flexibility for the benefit of the young people involved and the benefit of the project.

Prep

- It is critical at this point to establish positive and meaningful group dynamics - this will depend a lot on whether you are working with a new or existing group. Use your youth work skills to establish a positive, supportive group dynamic.
- Identify what resources are available and what resources are required for the project.
- Set realistic goals so that you can measure how successful the project/event had been; Identify skills in the group and how you can use these to contribute to the project; identify and undertake relevant training.
- Remember to always be solution-focused, rather than seeing barriers.

Plan

- This is where you and the young people will do practical planning for the social action project/event; Identify what tasks need to be completed for the initiative to be a success.
- Place people into relevant roles depending on their strengths, experience and enthusiasm for the role - each young person's role should be challenging for them but one which they can realistically fulfil. Each person should know exactly what is expected of them.
- If you are running an event or having a showcase as your social action, it's important to begin recruiting an audience at this stage. This will take a lot of your time and energy.

Deliver

- This is where you will deliver your project and social action event.
- Make sure everyone is aware and happy with what is expected of them and that people's job roles are keeping up with any organic changes that are occurring as the project naturally grows and develops.
- Always have your plan to hand but don't be afraid to add or change things as you go along, if it is to the benefit of the project and the young people involved - critically, make sure any additions or changes are communicated to the whole team.
- Make sure young people are at the forefront of delivery - support them in their roles but trust them to fulfil them.

Reflect

- It is important here to evaluate individual aspects of your project, such as the impact of the project on the young people's mental health and wellbeing. You should also constantly be taking feedback through the whole process.
- It is a good idea to purposefully reflect after each planning/delivery session with young people - what went well, what can be done better, what did young people say?
- Take feedback from audience members, or people who took part in the project - what did they most enjoy? What would they have like to see?
- Vitality, make sure you use your reflections and any feedback to shape future events and projects. Tokenistic feedback that is just filed in a drawer is a waste of everybody's time and energy.

The importance of the youth worker and their approach cannot be under valued. It can be likened to that of the conductor of an orchestra. You are there to guide, to nourish and to mentor. But when it comes time for the performance, you cannot play all the instruments, and neither should you want to. It is about finding a healthy balance between trusting young people and supporting them. Young people should be trusted to carry out their own tasks and fulfil their own roles but offered enough support so that they don't feel like they are lost or out of their depth. Keep reminding the young people that you believe in them, and more importantly, put this into practice - you should believe in them.

Tips for maximizing the impact of your youth work approach:

- Support young people to set goals that are both realistic and challenging. Giving somebody a role that is too easy will leave them feeling unchallenged but giving them a role that is too difficult will leave them feeling like they have underachieved. Remember that a role or a set of tasks that is easy for one young person could be extremely challenging for another. Always know and work from where each young person is at.
- Involve young people at every stage of your project - from coming up with idea, to carrying them out and feeding back ideas and suggestions. Let the young people own the project and put their own stamp on it - this will mean they are far more motivated to work as hard as they can to make the project a success.
- Have an open mind and really listen to and consider ideas that young people put forward. Even if they suggest something that you aren't familiar with, consider it and trust them. Young people may be more up to date on current trends in music and show business, so use this knowledge and enthusiasm to benefit the project.
- Make sure young people are at the front of the project and that they are very visible. Trust them to perform, host, or facilitate well - the benefits that they will get from an experience like this are immeasurable. This will also help us to fulfil our responsibility to championing young people's achievements and highlighting their positive contributions to communities and society.
- It is important to strike a healthy balance between trusting and supporting young people. We should encourage them to take responsibility of a project and trust that they will put on a successful event. By giving them more ownership they will feel valued and inspired to achieve their potential. However, they still need support and reassurance along the way. Understanding each young person should make it clear when to intervene or to take a step back. Doing this instinctively takes practice but it can certainly enable the young people to flourish on their own accord.
- Use peer education as a tool for maximizing the impact of the project by supporting young people to share the knowledge, skills and values they have learned throughout the process with their peers. Remember that a young person teaching another young person will help solidify and expand the learning for both of them.
- Use feedback that you receive from audience members or participants to positively affirm the achievements of the young people and help to develop areas that need improving. Recognising and celebrating success whilst providing constructive criticism will make them feel proud and boost their resilience, a very powerful tool in terms of personal growth.
- Remember that an event or showcase can be a very important output of your project, but the key outcome is young people engaging in creative expression in whatever way is meaningful for them. Celebrate achievements, big or small, but always focus on the learning process.

How to run an anti-stigma digital campaign

Social media is the most powerful tool you have at your disposal to promote the work you are doing. As well as advertising your project and any events you host, social media is a wonderful way of showcasing your young people and their achievements. Through your project, it's vital to encourage young people to raise awareness of the topic of mental health and try to decrease the stigma around it. Try the following to help you maximise your social media presence:

Create a Facebook page for your project - a Facebook page is a great way to connect with people in your community and share content which both markets and celebrates your project.

Stick to a hashtag - having a specific hashtag allows for you to connect all online content within that social media platform. For example, if all of your tweets reference #CreativeMindsYC then anyone can search for this and see all media which cites it. This is a wonderful way of collating all relevant media for you to enjoy, circulate and even contribute towards your evaluation process.

Use all kinds of social media platform - this ensures that you maximise your online presence. Use Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, YouTube, and any more you can think of.

Use social media to learn and share your knowledge - social media is a fantastic tool through which you can learn new things to support your project. Online forums, articles, video tutorials and masterclasses can be highly valuable when working on your project; often it is real life experience which can guide you most effectively. In turn, you can share your knowledge in order to support other people wishing to learn. By sharing tips, learning, highlights, stories and advice you can contribute massively towards peer education. Peer education is one of the most important aspects of a youth project, as it allows young people to become experts in certain areas and share their knowledge with their community and their peers. Documenting your journey throughout your project can also contribute towards your evaluation once your project is complete.

Look out for key dates- You can see the national holidays around the world that celebrate mental health and also raise awareness of certain topics. Do some research into these dates and make sure you are making an impact using your platform, to be part of the bigger movement decreasing the stigma around mental health and wellbeing.

“It has been inspiring to work on the Creative Minds Project and see how young people’s mental health and wellbeing really can be improved through engaging with Creative Arts activities. The Creative Minds Project, funded by Spirit of 2012, has been an amazing opportunity for young people to explore, and develop lifelong skills and hobbies in the arts.

The hub workers have gone above and beyond to provide weekly sessions and support for young people, even showing their commitment by continuing through online mediums during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I hope young people and youth workers alike have benefitted from this project and learnt more about the impact of creativity and connections, on their mental health and wellbeing.

Thank you to all who were involved.”

Anna Arrieta- Youth Cymru



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