

HEALTHVOICE

Wednesday 21 February 2007

CONFERENCE REPORT

Background

In preparation for their fourth youth conference, the FORest YOUTH forum designed and produced a survey to find out which health issues concern young people the most. Questions were also included to find out about diet and exercise trends.

Copies of the survey were distributed to all secondary schools in the Forest area. A booking form was included in the survey to invite all young people between the ages of 13 and 19 to attend a youth conference on Wednesday 21st February.

427 responses were received and the findings of the survey were used to plan the workshops and activities for the Healthvoice youth conference.

The Conference

At 10am on Wednesday 21st February, 25 young people arrived at Splinters Youth Centre in Cinderford. After registering, they were asked to choose which workshops and activities they would like to attend during the day.

Jon Taylor (Playing for Success) opened the conference with an energetic and fun session, encouraging everyone to be happy and eat bananas!

Youth Forum members led a quiz to see how much the audience really knew about healthy diets, smoking, drugs, sexual health, exercise and mental health.

The audience were then invited to "wake and shake" by Angela James, with three short exercise routines designed to get them out of the chairs and invigorated for the rest of the day.

For the next hour, there was a choice of three workshops:

- Managing Stress (Julie Vale, Teens in Crisis)
- Stopping Smoking (Kate Gegg, NHS)
- Know Your Mind (Simon Gillings, Youth Service).

During the lunchtime period, various activities were available including fitness testing, street dance and hand massage.

The most popular lunchtime activity was to make a healthy lunch. Ingredients were provided by Diana Gaskins of the Get Cooking Project to make rolls, pitta breads, wraps, salads, rice, cous cous, hot fruit kebabs and smoothies.

After lunch, there was another opportunity to attend one of the three workshops from the morning session.

Graham Spearman (Forest Team Leader, Youth Service) brought the day to a close by giving a presentation about the work of the Youth Forum and inviting young people to get involved.

The audience were asked to complete an Evaluation Form before leaving the venue. As a thank you for coming to the event, the young people went home with 'goodie' bags full of stress balls, pens, mobile phone accessories and useful information on mental, emotional and physical health issues.

Evaluation forms summary

What did you think about the conference?

Excellent - 47% Good – 47% Ok – 6% Not good – 0%

What did you think about the "happiness" session?

Excellent - 41% Good – 53% Ok – 6% Not good – 0%

What did you think about the "wake and shake" session?

Excellent - 65% Good – 23% Ok – 12% Not good – 0%

What did you think about the "smoking" workshop?

Excellent - 43% Good – 57% Ok – 0% Not good – 0%

What did you think about the "managing stress" workshop?

Excellent - 35% Good – 53% Ok – 12% Not good – 0%

What did you think about the "know your mind" workshop?

Excellent - 53% Good – 29% Ok – 18% Not good – 0%

Was Splinters a good venue for the conference?

Excellent - 53% Good – 41% Ok – 6% Not good – 0%

What did you think about the lunchtime activities?

Excellent - 71% Good – 29% Ok – 0% Not good – 0%

How would you improve the conference?

- More young people to be involved maybe more promotion for the day and get the young people involved in promoting the day
- Something about/by people who have been affected by the main points
- I couldn't improve it because it was really good
- More active fun activities and choice of workshops
- Try to use fitness suite
- I would not change anything!

If the Youth Forum held another youth conference, which topic would you choose?

Environment
33%

Personal Safety
20%

Tackling Discrimination
40%

Drugs and alcohol
7%

Comments from the day

- *The health voice conference was full of useful information ranging from how to exercise without boring yourself and good healthy recipes that taste very good! My favourite activity from the day was "WAKE AND SHAKE!" because it got everybody up and active. It really helped me wake up.*
- *At the health conference I enjoyed doing all the activities and all the things I could get into and take part in.*
- *We had many helpful and good interactive activities such as a smoking workshop and stress relief activities. We had a special guest called Jon Taylor who attempted to make us all happier within an hour. I felt the workshops went well and everyone looked happy. There was good teamwork and the lunchtime food was very good. All in all I felt it was a success and people went home with helpful information.*
- *The health voice conference at Splinters was a very productive event that had lots of information and tips on a variety of subjects. The two boys I was with said it was a very interesting day.*
- *The conference was a great place for all young people to learn what you need to do to lead a happy, healthy lifestyle.*
- *I enjoyed the Health Voice conference because there was a good selection of activities and workshops. I especially enjoyed the Wake and Shake workshop.*
- *An interesting day! Thanks*
- *An enjoyable day! Thank you!*

The HEALTHVOICE youth conference was organised for young people by
the **FORest YOUth forum**