

SUPPORTING SIBLINGS INFORMATION EVENTS

EVALUATION REPORT

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Autism Spectrum Disorders Diagnosis Supporting Siblings Event's Evaluations

Background

Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) in partnership with the Northern Trust Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) team identified the need to complete engagement with siblings who live in families where a brother or sister has an ASD diagnosis.

Supporting Siblings workshops were promoted throughout the Northern Trust area via a variety of methods which included; Northern Trust ASD team, Autism Charities which included Autism NI and National Autistic Association, local schools and Children and Young People's Locality planning groups

Engagement workshops were completed in the Cookstown, Magherafelt and Carrickfergus Locality. Engagement was completed with 12 children and young people aged 6 to 14 years. The group consisted of 7 girls and 5 boys.

The Participation Development Officer for CYPSP co-ordinated and facilitated the Supporting Siblings workshops in the Northern Trust area.

See Appendix 1 for Engagement report.

Introduction

The supporting sibling's events were co-ordinated by CYPSP and the Northern Trust ASD team and supported by Barnardo's young carers service.

Two supporting siblings events were arranged to provide siblings who live in families where a brother or sister has an ASD diagnosis.

The criteria for siblings to attend included:

- Aged 9 plus
- Had a brother or sister that had an ASD diagnosis

Details of events include:

Date & Time of Event	Venue	Attendance of young people
Thursday 23 rd April 6-8pm	Cookstown Leisure Centre	28
Thursday 30 th April 6–8 pm	Sunnylands Community Centre, Carrickfergus	23

Methodology

The Supporting Siblings events session plans included:

- Buffet dinner
- Fun Icebreaker – Bingo game
- Welcome and Introductions from CYPSP team and ASD Team
- Focus group discussions
 - What is ASD
 - How and why it affects your brother/sister
 - Top Tips to deal with difficult situations
- Information and Activities from Barnardo's Young Carers service
- Sticky wall Evaluation.

Young people's opportunity to tell us what they enjoyed about the event and how we could go about making it better.

- Top Tips Supporting Siblings Leaflet (see Appendix 2)

All young people who attended the event received a Top Tips leaflet which was developed by the Participation Officer in partnership with the Trust ASD team.

- Goodybags and Voucher

After the event all young people who attended received CYPSP goody bags which included loads of freebies and a free £5 voucher for their local leisure centre.

Supporting Siblings Events

Young people enjoying the supporting siblings event in Cookstown



Pictured is Sandra Anderson CYPSP Participation, NHSCT ASD Team; Heather McCarroll, Michael Gregory, Linzi Smyth, Joanne Murphy, Paula Murphy and Dougie Tyler from Barnardo's Young Carers Service along with 23 young people who attended the Supporting Siblings Event in Carrickfergus

Young people enjoying the Supporting Siblings event in Carrickfergus



Pictured is Sandra Anderson CYPSP Participation, NHSCT ASD Team; Heather McCarroll, Linzi Smyth, Joanne Murphy, Paula Murphy and Angela MacDonald from Barnardo's Young Carers Service along with 23 young people who attended the Supporting Siblings Event in Carrickfergus



Young people taking part in group discussions on what is ASD and how it impacts the family





Young people finding out about Top Tips for Siblings who have a brother or sister with an ASD diagnosis



Supporting Siblings Evaluation Feedback

Feedback from young people

All young people who attended the Supporting Siblings event were asked for feedback on what they enjoyed about the event and how we could make it better.

Feedback included:

Things young people enjoyed:

- Sweets/Lolly's
- Fun activities
- The Bingo game was fun
- Free stuff

Young people commented on things that they had learnt or found useful;

Brother/Sister with ASD

- Enjoyed the fact that I could talk about my brother to people
- I thought tonight was an eye opener; it was good to see how others handle ASD.
- It was helpful to know other kids have the same problem
- I liked the way we got to learn more about Autism Spectrum Disorder Diagnosis.
- Talking to other people and realising the similarities
- Learnt a lot about Autism
- Tonight was really interesting. All of my questions were answered.
- Tips were especially helpful, thanks
- Met some people in the same circumstances
- It was good to be able to talk to other young people with similar issues and discuss how to deal with them.
- Learnt that other people have the same problem.
- This was very informative and helpful to me.
- It was an eye opener and gave me a better view of how to cope with my autistic brother.
- It was good to hear how others handle ASD
- I got answers to my questions
- Making new friends
- I liked meeting new people and being able to talk about how I feel
- Learnt about why ASD affects my brother
- I enjoyed learning more and finding out what it is like for others
- The tips really helped me
- Talking about the problems

Overall young people concluded:

- It was fab
- It was cool tonight, thanks everybody
- I got to meet other people
- Loved it today
- Very interesting and good advice
- Loved it today and really opened my mind about ASD
- Very interactive

Recommendations

- More games
- More time to talk would make it even better
- I would recommend this to others
- No improvements
- Would not change anything

Feedback from Barnardo's young carer's service

'I thought the event was a great success and would benefit many other siblings caring for a sibling with ASD across NI. It was very well organised and time restraints were kept to as much as possible. I felt the children and young people felt a sense of togetherness and it was good for them to meet up with each other in the setting. I also thought it was good having young and older all mixed together as that way the younger children gained experience from the elders and the elders could feel inspired and appraised in the knowledge they had and could pass on.'

The only sort of negative was that 15 minutes wasn't a lot of time for me at the end and I had to talk a mile a minute, but saying that they must have grasped the general info as I have received 5 referrals from the night which is really great.'

(Angela McDonald, Barnardo's Young Carers)

Feedback from Northern Trust ASD service

Northern Trust ASD facilitators who participated at the workshops shared the following feedback:

‘Overall I feel it was an extremely worthwhile piece of work and the joint working between CYPSP and NHSCT brought strength to this.

If possible I think this is something that should be continued on a rolling programme across all of the NHSCT area in order to be able to meet the needs of more siblings therefore having a lasting positive impact for the siblings, family and the individuals with Autism.

Having Barnardos Young Carers involved was very worthwhile and on reflection to give them a greater part in further events may bring further outcomes for the siblings and increase their engagement in this service.’

(Heather McCarroll, Northern Trust ASD Co-ordinator)

‘From a facilitator’s point of view I believe that the workshops were highly successful in beginning to recognise and meet the needs of siblings of young people with a diagnosis of ASD. There is very obviously a need for more work of this type for families of people with ASD of all ages and the high interest and positive feedback from the large number of participants was, I believe, testament to this!

The preparation for and organisation of the workshops was a credit to those involved and I would be privileged to be involved in similar initiatives in the future.’

(Paula Murphy , Adult Autism Practitioner)

Recommendations

Additional Supporting Siblings events should be organised in other areas throughout the Northern Trust and on a continued basis to provide:

- Siblings with correct information on their brother/sister ASD diagnosis
- Information to siblings on how to cope with difficult situations at home
- Inform siblings of the Barnardo’s young carer’s service.

Supporting Siblings Events Conclusion

Feedback from children, young people, parents and facilitators have reported the supporting sibling's events to be a very worthwhile event that has equipped children and young people with the necessary information regarding their brother/sisters ASD diagnosis and some Top Tips on how to cope with difficult situations.