

include
YOUTH

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

PRESENTATION TO CYPSP 18TH FEBRUARY 2021

WHO WE ARE

In May 1979 the Northern Ireland Intermediate Treatment Association was established. Over 40 years on, what is now Include Youth, has grown beyond recognition.

Include Youth now operate across NI and Donegal from 7 offices and with over 50 staff delivering service to over 800 young people a year.

Our offices are based in Belfast, Derry, Omagh, Ballymena, Lifford, Ards, and Armagh.



OUR MISSION, VISION & VALUES

MISSION

Include Youth is a rights based charity for children and young people in or leaving care from disadvantaged communities or whose rights are not being met to improve the employability, personal and social development. Include Youth influences public policy and all our work is led by the voice of children and young people, evidenced based and international children's rights standards.

VISION

Include Youth's vision is of a society that realises and fulfils the rights and potential of all children and young people.

VALUES

EQUALITY – INCLUSION – OPPORTUNITY - INTEGRITY

THE YOUNG PEOPLE WE WORK WITH

The young people Include Youth work with come from a wide range of backgrounds. There are, amongst our young people, many complex needs and we are fortunate, through our youth work approach and a skilled staff team, to be able to help address these needs and support the young people on positive pathways.

- Young people in care or leaving care
- Newcomers and unaccompanied minors (including asylum seekers and refugees)
- Young people from socially deprived backgrounds
- Young people from partner organisations
- Young people who are at risk of or have experienced Child Sexual exploitation
- LGBTQ+ young people
- Young people with mental health issues
- Young people who display sexually harmful behaviours
- Young people at risk from, or have been involved in, the justice system
- Young people at risk from, or involvement with paramilitaries
- Young carers
- Young parents

WHAT WE ACHIEVE

- Include Youth work with over 800 young people a year.
- Over the last 2 years young people on our programmes have achieved just under 2,000 qualifications (Essential Skills and OCNs).
- Include Youth have had 79% positive moves to employment or further education under Give and Take.
- Our work directly influences government policy and practice giving a voice to young people at government level. Include Youth have submitted consultation responses and published papers on areas such as:
 - The proposed Youth Justice Campus
 - The impact of COVID on Young People
 - A submission to the Expert Panel on Education Underachievement regarding care experienced young people
 - Successive Programme's for Governments
 - The Looked After Children's Strategy

OUR PROGRAMMES 1

GIVE AND TAKE

Give and Take is an employability and personal development programme that supports care experienced young people aged 16 – 21 with opportunities to learn new skills, gain qualifications, get work experience and develop the confidence that is needed to for their journey into employment.

Give and Take has five main components:

- Give and Take Core
- Give and Take Outreach
- START
- One to One
- Transitions



Strive is a good relations programme for young people aged 14 to 24 led by Include Youth in partnership with Youth Initiatives, Newstart Education Centre, NI Alternatives & Lifford Clonleigh Resource Centre. It is a youth led programme through our 'Expert by Experience' approach, young people who use their expertise to design and deliver a programme that best meets the needs and interests of other young people. Strive is a cross community, cross cultural and cross border programme that engages young people in transformative good relations, citizenship and personal development work.

LEARNING FOR ACTION

Learning for Action is an innovative essential skills programme that equips young people to make positive changes. The aim of this programme is to improve the educational and employability outcomes for care experienced and disadvantaged young people. We offer young people Essential Skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT across 9 sites and for our 1-2-1 programme which operates an outreach service. we aim to Increase the skills and capacity uyoung people to lead on this programme, build life skills and affect positive change.

OUR PROGRAMMES 2



Meant to Work Plus is a programme in partnership with Belfast Trust supporting care experienced young people to access employment and other vocational opportunities within the Trust and their sub-contractors.

The mentoring programme helps young people gain and sustain meaningful employment. The Meant to Work team help young people gain employability skills, build a CV, research career options, fill in job application forms and prepare for job interviews.



An employability programme for young people aged 16-24 in the Greater Belfast, North Down and Ards area, delivered in partnership with Northern Ireland Alternatives.

Start offers employability skills training, personal development opportunities, teambuilding, qualifications and mentoring support across three delivery sites in the Shankill area, Belfast, Bangor and East Belfast.



Include Youth's employability team delivers the Employability Service in the Western Health and Social Care Trust area and in partnership with Start360 in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area. The service is aimed specifically at young people aged 16 - 21, who are in care and have been identified as being in need of education, employment or training.

PRACTICE, POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Include Youth influences public policy and all our work is led by the voice of children and young people, evidence-based practice and international children's rights standards.
- Include Youth is one of the leading voices within the youth sector and stands out as having a dedicated approach to both policy advocacy and an effective communications approach.
- The primary focus of both policy and communications is to provide and amplify the voice of the young people who we represent and those young people in society whose rights are not being met. *Include Youth is unique in that our policy and communications work is linked directly to practice.*

INCLUDE YOUTH'S PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Include Youth has a long history of collaborative working and values working in partnership. This includes partnerships with the following:

- All 5 Health & Social Care Trusts
- Strive partners including Newstart Education Centre, Northern Ireland Alternatives, Youth Initiatives and Lifford Clonleigh Resource Centre.
- START with Northern Ireland Alternatives.
- START 360 & the Belfast Trust on our Employability programme.
- We have also worked closely with the University of Ulster, Queens University Belfast, the PSNI, the CYPSP, the Youth Justice Agency and several government departments.

Through our partnerships, Include Youth have also become a resource in terms of advisory and inclusive policy work, providing guidance for many organisations within the community and statutory sector with both a high level of expertise and training in the fields of policy development, policy advocacy and communications skills.

THANK YOU

For more information on Include Youth
and with work we carry out visit

www.includeyouth.org

or follow us on our social media channels



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PRESENTATION TO CYPSP 18TH FEBRUARY 2021

NEW DECADE: NEW APPROACH

Establish an expert group to examine the links between persistent educational underachievement and socio-economic background and draw up an action plan for change that will ensure all children and young people, regardless of background, are given the best start in life.

New Decade, New Approach Deal; January 2020

EXPERT PANEL APPOINTED

The Expert Panel will :

- examine the links between persistent educational underachievement and socio-economic background;
- give particular consideration to the long-standing issues facing working-class, Protestant boys, and specific actions to address this particular gap;
- produce an interim report;
- draw up an Action Plan for change that will ensure all children and young people, regardless of background are given the best start in life;
- estimate the cost of implementing the Action Plan.

INCLUDE YOUTH SUBMISSION

- Review must consider educational outcomes of **wider group of young people**
- Young people with **care experience** must be included
- Draw attention to existing research and recommendations

Educational outcomes and educational experiences

Year ending 31 March 2020 16 – 18 yr old care leavers:

- 23% statement of SEN (5.5% general pop)
- 34% no qualifications leaving care
- 27% 5GCSEs A* - C (over 80% general pop)
- 56% leaving residential care had **no qualifications**

In 2019/20, 27% of care leavers aged 19 were NEET.

ACCESS ALL AREAS REPORT 2017

Increase understanding of and respond to educational barriers faced by care experienced young people

While the picture is improving, a considerable gap still exists when compared to the general population.

Recognise and respond to unique needs of care experienced young people within educational, training and employability programmes

Employability services and alternative education and training programmes are vital provisions. All relevant government departments and agencies as corporate parents are in a position to ensure there is flexibility within these structures to support care leavers and to provide additional employment and training opportunities.

Collaborate to reduce financial barriers and obstacles to engaging in and sustaining pathways into employment

. Corporate parents need to fully address the financial barriers and obstacles faced by care leavers

YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS ON EDUCATIONAL UNDERACHIEVEMENT

LABELLED:

"They are treated like they are not good enough, so they start to believe that and don't try at school".

"There are stereotypes attached to them, they are seen as messers".

"They are not encouraged enough, they are seen as causing mischief".

"Care children are put under more pressure by teachers, they are constantly under the microscope and treated differently".

"I was kicked out of my foster care home and walked to school at 7.30am, I arrived early and all the teachers wanted to know was WHY I was there when it was not school time yet, they had no understanding of what I had just been through that time before".

TREATED DIFFERENTLY BY PEERS:

“They might not have clean clothes”.

“I was bullied for being in care”.

“Everyone knowing you have a social worker”.

IMPACT OF MULTIPLE MOVES:

“You find it harder to make friends because you are always moving school”.

“I was in 19 foster placements in 4 years, then moved to Secure, then moved to a children’s home, all in a short period of time. I didn’t want to go to a children’s home but was TOLD I would move there from Lakewood. I would have much preferred to stay at a foster placement, much better”.

LACK OF SUPPORT:

“They don’t have the same support as everyone else, like a mum or dad”.

“It’s hard living in a care home”.

“You have no chance of getting homework done in a children’s home”.

“Overwhelmed with multiple classes and no additional support”.

TRAUMA AND SURVIVAL:

“They have trauma and other issues going on”.

“Their priorities in life might not be about doing homework but more about keeping safe”.

“Losing family is really hard”.

“Trauma creates triggers and they are not supported enough, they are just seen as disruptive”.

IMPACT OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT

“No job”.

“Poverty”.

“End up on benefits”.

“You need education for a job”.

“You don’t have much options for jobs”.

“You end up thinking you are not good enough for a job”.


“You don’t have any routine”.

“You find it hard by not being used to being told what to do so you struggle in a job”.

“You won’t work because of low self esteem so you just don’t try.”

“You just follow the same cycle as your parents and family”.

STAFF VIEWS ON CAUSES

- Impact of multiple moves
 - Trauma
 - Lack of support specific to care experienced young people
 - Stigma/bullying
 - Teachers lack of understanding of complex issue and need to look beyond behaviour
 - Lack of mental health interventions
 - Low self esteem and sense of worthlessness
- 

FEELINGS OF WORTHLESSNESS

*“I’ve spoken to young people who say they felt **held down by the system**. The ones who were struggling were pushed down and the ones who could thrive thrived, but they felt put to the side, care experienced young people were treated completely different to young people who thrive”*

*“The young people in care that I’ve worked with over a long period, almost all of them have had a **tremendous sense of personal failure**, they **don’t feel they are valued**. They don’t value themselves very often, they don’t think they can succeed. And it takes a lot of work setting up things where they can succeed before they can start to see that there is a possibility of them succeeding”.*

*“It’s their whole self-worth that is getting attacked, so you **don’t believe you are able to achieve**, it’s beat into you from your peers, from teachers, from everybody, so you believe that you can’t achieve, so you want to be good at something so you might be the **biggest clown in the class or the one who does the most messing or is disruptive**”.*

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

TRAINING FOR TEACHERS:

“Teachers should be trained better. Teachers are trained to deal with mainstream students who can cope with formal education structure”.

“How teachers speak to you, treat you like a human and not that they are better than you”.

“My teacher used to always point to the ‘good girl’ in class and say ‘why can you not be more like her’, ‘I did actually crack up one day, and shouted back ‘Because I’M NOT HER’ “.

“Teachers should be more calm and understanding”.

“Teachers asking discreetly why you haven’t homework done instead of shouting in front of the whole class”.

“Maybe if they could think about how hard it is to even get into school some mornings before they start shouting and stuff about you not having something done”.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

RESPECT ALL FORMS OF EDUCATION AND LEARNING:

“Education should meet the needs of all young people, not just those who thrive in a formal setting”.

“Understand that not ALL children work the same, not everyone is ACADEMIC, teachers think we need to meet these agreed ‘TARGETS’ but that just wasn’t me”.

PROVIDE DIFFERENT FORMS OF LEARNING:

“More interactive work, instead of just standing in front of the board”.

“Everybody learns differently”.

ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS:

“Bring outside agencies in”.

“Have mental health classes”.

“There should be more options – to take a break when you feel overwhelmed”.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

SMALLER GROUP TEACHING:

“Smaller classes would have made me feel more supported”.

“One to one classes”.

MORE SUPPORT AT HOME AND SCHOOL:

“You don’t get the help when you need it”.

“The system keeps struggling students down and lets good students progress”.

“Understand the problems that a young person might be having at home”.

SPECIFIC SUPPORT FOR CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE:

“Yes, but this (greater family engagement) only works if you have a family.”

“More understanding about how difficult it can be to get work done outside of school”.

“They need to put more support in for people like us”.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

EARLY INTERVENTION SEN:

“You need early diagnosis, I knew I had autism but wasn’t diagnosed until I left school so wasn’t offered any support without the diagnosis”.

“I had extra needs but never had any help”.

IMPROVED CAREER ADVICE/EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT:

“Learning how to get a job in school”.

BROADENED CURRICULUM/MORE SUBJECT CHOICE:

“More vocational courses – life skills”.

YOUTH WORK PROVISION IN SCHOOLS:

“There should be more youth workers in schools”.

“They should run youth programmes”.

THE INCLUDE YOUTH MODEL

The young people who join the Give & Take Scheme carry varying levels of trauma both from their childhood, and that are ongoing, resulting in barriers to education. A mainstream further education setting, while suitable for some children and young people from a care background, is not suitable for many at this stage. If mainstream was an option, it would have worked before now; something different is needed. The Give & Take Scheme provides space for nurture in the form of belonging to a group (for Start and Core), and relationship with youth workers and tutors helps change attitudes to education. In time this changes attitudes to and choices in employment, and ultimately leads to greater choices in life.

David Thompson, Independent Evaluation for Include Youth for Essential Potential (The Essential Skills Component of the Give and Take programme), 2018

'ESSENTIAL' INGREDIENTS

- **Relationships** the young people have with the tutors – instill self belief
- **Small groups** and one to one
- **Relaxed, informal and appropriately paced learning environment**
- **Youth workers who are on hand** to help young people deal with everyday challenges.
- **Young people have a say** – participative, strength based model
- **Circle of support** build's young people's confidence and helps them see that they can achieve.

*“We hear testimonies from young people who confide in us that some of them have been told in the past by teachers that they are ‘useless’ and ‘are not capable of learning’. Our staff have a different approach and start with the importance of the **relationship where trust is built**, and a **mutual respect** gained. Encouragement, **starting at where the young person is at** and going at an **appropriate pace** are all factors in what enables our young people to grow. Young people achieve qualifications with us for all these reasons. The greatest achievement our staff can boast is not that they have helped young people to achieve qualifications but they have shown the young person that they are **able to learn and to achieve** and this is the beginning of a journey not the end”.*

YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS ON INCLUDE YOUTH

Learning through doing rather than being spoken to at the front of the class.

They get to know you individually.

*Understanding staff and teachers who are **patient**.*

*Staff **don't shout** or embarrass you in front of everyone.*

*They are more **approachable**.*

*They are more **flexible**.*

*Being in **smaller groups** helps.*

The topics we do are relevant.

*You get more **encouragement** – you believe in yourself more.*

*They helped me **recognise my strengths**.*

*In school, you're a number, but in here the **tutors talk to you like you're a person**.*

*We do have votes on what we'd like to do... we always get a couple of options... we get to put our **own ideas** into things.*

SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT


The pride that young people feel when they do achieve is immense.

“[The certificate] Makes you feel good about yourself and proud of yourself that you actually achieved something that you tried to get so many times before.

It was brilliant. Because I've never got anything like that before.

When I first came here, I didn't believe I would ever be capable of gaining a qualification. I have come so far.”

WHAT NEXT?

- **Recognition of the value and need** for tailored education and employability programmes for young people
 - **Adoption of youth work values** and youth work provision in mainstream education
 - **Recognition that we are delivering** on key PfG targets of Health, Education and Economy departments
 - Current Include Youth essential skills programme is under threat
 - Need to **secure funding** to ensure our service continues
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LAST WORDS TO CAOTHAN.....

“My time in Give and Take was a wonderful experience. I started off with no education whatsoever, having failed multiple GCSEs at school I felt like an absolute failure. Give and Take taught me that learning can also be a wonderful experience, in my two years in the programme I started my music career, got my Maths and English and started a full time employment. With the help of Give and Take I have been working there over 8 months. ... I wish everyone I worked with lots of happiness and I want to thank Give and Take for giving me a second chance at life.”