

Notes from the East Midlands Voluntary Youth Regional RELOAD event 27/4/18

Message from One East Midlands

Website: <http://www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk/>

Andria Birch, Chair of One East Midlands, spoke about the East Midlands Inclusion Framework being developed on behalf of the sector by One East Midlands. The Framework will provide a tool to be used by VCSE organisations to develop their own strategies to help the most excluded. Early discussions with the consultants has shown that service commissioners welcome the Framework, which will include practical options to implement at local level. The deadline for the consultation of the Framework is May 5th and the East Midlands Inclusion Framework will be published in early July 2018.

Presentation by Charles Shaw - Chair of EMVY

Charles revisited his 2017 RELOAD presentation and spoke of the continual changes to youth services. Youth service structures are changing and being impacted by politics, including Brexit and changes in Government (e.g. the planned Cabinet Office consultation into youth provision didn't happen in 2017 due to change in Government)

Charles spoke about the Commonwealth Young Professionals programme to demonstrate the variety of programmes and opportunities for young people. Here's a youtube link about this programme:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5aZyyfux8Hs>

Presentation by Joe Russo - Founder of the Enthusiasm Trust

Website: <http://enthusiasm.org.uk/>

Joe began by talking about his journey to the foundation of the Enthusiasm Trust. Living on the Allenton estate in Derby, he set up a youth club after he challenged local lads who were up to mischief. The youth club attracted over 100 young people every Friday night, mainly young people who were out of control, and the club did whatever the young people were interested in. Innovative ideas were implemented, for example a young man who was a habitual burglar was put in charge of the tuck shop. One day there was a knock on the door by the local policeman who gave thanks for the reduction in crime on the estate.

In 2000 the club became a charity to be able to apply for funding. The Enthusiasm Trust works with the most challenging young people, with aims of prevention and

early intervention. They have received national recognition and contributed to the Home Office Serious Violence strategy.

Joe spoke of the variety of 'gangs' from uniformed clubs to street gangs. He spoke of Boy X and Boy Y, telling the story of Boy X as a perpetrator of crime/violence and Boy Y as a victim of abuse. The two boys were actually the same boy and Joe used this story to demonstrate that many perpetrators of crime/violence have been subject to neglect and violence themselves (83% of gang members).

Language - Joe advocates the importance of using correct language, with a move to identify 'young people' as 'children'. The UK puts more children in jail than any other European country.

Tackling county lines - people travel out of their local area to commit crimes as they are less likely to be known. Vulnerable young people are being used to transport drugs over county lines.

Protecting vulnerable locations - such as children's homes and alternative educational provisions (PRUs). Criminals target these young people.

Reducing violence and knife crime - this is critical. Joe talked about a boy who was robbed at knife point. He reported the crime to the local police, who made enquiries but did not report back to the boy. He therefore decided to carry a knife himself for self-protection. Concern about how social media is used to escalate conflict and the 'Jeremy Kyle' syndrome.

Safeguarding gang associated women and girls - there is a lot of talk about girl gangs but Joe's experience is that the girls are being exploited. Joe spoke about ACES - adverse childhood experiences - exposure to seeing knife crime or seeing family member being abused.

Promote early intervention - Joe recommends intervention from 0 to 25 years. Most people at the meeting admitted to getting drunk and disorderly during their early teens so intervention needs to start earlier in life but there is a cost to this work.

Promote meaningful alternatives - an example of offering sport to a non-sporty young person will not reduce crime/violence. The young people that the Enthusiasm Trust supports would never join the Commonwealth Young Professionals programme mentioned by Charles.

Three levels to success

1. personal relationships with youth workers - is safeguarding getting in the way of developing safe personal relationships?
2. be pragmatic - youth services need to change with the times
3. prevention

Young people want to belong and be part of something. Youth workers need to provide the 'right' kind of gang.

Joe gave the story of the old man who's son was in jail. The old man rings his son to say he cannot dig over the ground in his allotment as it's too hard. The son rings the police to say there are bodies in the allotment. The police dig over the allotment and find nothing. The son has managed to help the old man despite being locked away.

Presentation by Andy Hamill - National Association of Boys and Girls Club

Website: <http://www.nabgc.org.uk/>

The NABGC started over 100 years ago and is one of the earliest examples of youth work. It has approx 20 members, supporting 100,000 young people and 15,000 volunteers. They provide programmes of activities from local to county to national and international level, giving opportunities to progress and expand horizons/experiences, meeting new people, whilst having fun.

They provide training experiences for volunteers in youth work and leadership.

Presentation by Ellie Locke, UK Youth

Website: <https://www.ukyouth.org/>

Ellie spoke of the UK Youth Achievement award. The challenge is led by the young person taking part, setting their own targets.

A statistic from the presentation showed that only 2% of youth workers are JNC qualified and this generated a debate about the value of youth worker qualifications and how potentially the statistic could be misleading as the figure is based on those responding to the survey only.

Jodie (Programme Manager) from the National Youth Association (<https://nya.org.uk/>) spoke about the NYA work, including an apprenticeship programme. The NYA lobbies on behalf of youth workers, provides workforce development and a programme of work to enable youth workers to put policy into practice.

Young inspectors service - young people 'test' youth provision. For more information, contact Katrina Hewitt via katrina.hewitt@lincolnshire.gov.uk.