

Service Delivery Case Study

Beacon Theme	Positive Youth Engagement		
Authority name	City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council		
Case Study title	Enhancing the Delivery of Relationships and Sex Education in Wakefield District		
Theme	Influencing Services		
Also linked to these themes			
Influencing Services		ICT & media	
Grant giving		Structures for youth engagement	√
Partnerships	√	Social inclusion	√
Citizenship	√	Volunteering	
Summary			
<p>WakiesWatchDog are a group of young people conducting research into young peoples needs in the District using a multi media arts studio along with conferences, the UK Youth Parliament Network and the Wakiesworld web site.</p> <p>WakiesWatchDog carried out research into the standard of sex education in schools across the District. They reported their findings to the Wakefield District Partnership (the Wakefield Local Strategic Partnership) at a Question Time event in December 2004. This case study describes the different routes being taken to achieve change in our schools in ensuring a standardised approach to sex and relationships education across the District.</p> <p>Almost two years on the key outcome is a change in emphasis and shift in the way that Relationships and Sex Education will be progressed in schools across the District.</p>			
Background			
<p>Wakefield District is in the heart of Yorkshire and the Humber, covers some 339 square kilometres and is home to 319,800 people in a diverse range of city, urban and rural communities. Approximately 61,000 (19%) are aged between 5 and 19 years.</p> <p>Wakefield has undergone major social and economic changes over the last 25 years. The loss of traditional industries has had a severe impact on local communities and the industrial heritage has also left a legacy of poor health, preventing many from re-entering work. The Council has continued to make real progress in the last three years in tackling some of these areas, becoming a thriving manufacturing, retail and distribution centre, taking full advantage of its place at the heart of the region's transport network and significant progress has been made on key flagship regeneration schemes. However, the District continues to face a number of challenges from its economic legacy.</p> <p>Wakefield is a historic seat of regional government in Yorkshire and for two centuries provided the county headquarters of the former West Riding of Yorkshire. Today the City retains its strong tradition of public services employment with the headquarters of the City</p>			

of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council, the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Assembly and West Yorkshire Police all located within the City Centre.

The make up of the Council is predominantly Labour, holding 41 of the 63 seats, Liberal Democrats with 3, Conservatives 14 and Independents 5 seats.

This case study explores the lack of consistency around the delivery of Sex and Relationships Education in schools across the District. The problems were identified by WakiesWatchDog working with young people across the District using various research methods. Almost two years on the key outcome is a change in emphasis and shift in the way that Relationships and Sex Education is progressed in schools across the District.

Key issues/problems

WakiesWatchDog presented their findings to the Wakefield District Partnership in December 2004

The findings of their research highlighted the inconsistencies across the District's schools, with over half the lessons being taught by non-specialist teachers, a quarter by the pupils' form teacher, 14% were delivered by the school nurse and 28% by a specialist. Most of the young people surveyed were taught about contraception, sexual development, sexually shared infections, relationships and pregnancy and childbirth, however less than half were told about where to find local sexual health services or given information on abortion or sexual preferences. Most of the young people questioned didn't know that school governors decided on what sex education they received with 98% saying that this is wrong.

As a result of the Partnership Question Time Event, WakiesWatchDog decided to carry out further research into sex education.

What you did

The Council worked in partnership with the Primary Care Trusts and school governing bodies to address the issues raised.

At the Partnership Question Time Event it was agreed that sexual health services would continue to be a priority in the Health and Social Well Being Action Plan, which is one of the delivery plans for the District's Community Strategy, and that ways of increasing support to ensure effective coverage be considered. This resulted in a number of new initiatives (see key outcomes).

In October 2005 WakiesWatchDog attended the Wakefield District Partnership Board Meeting to share further findings of their research. The opportunity was taken by the Partnership to share with young people the progress made on all the issues raised at the Question Time Event. In relation to SRE the outcome of the meeting was that the Chair of the Partnership would write to all Head Teachers and School Governing Bodies to ask that it be an agenda item at the next appropriate Governors meeting. This was also supported by a report from the Corporate Director Children's Services highlighting the findings of the report given to the Wakefield District Partnership.

As a result of the above an event for Governors and Head Teachers was arranged to look at issues relating to SRE. There was a panel, which included the Teacher Advisor PSHE and Citizenship, Member of UKYP, Primary Heads representative and the Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator. The panel gave a brief presentation on the issues from their

perspective and then took questions from the floor. The event was extremely positive and it was agreed that there is a need to ensure consistency of approach of SRE and that young people have an entitlement to SRE provision. The SRE Policy is to be updated by end December 2006 and will be re-named Relationships and Sex Education Policy. As part of this there will be a programme of study developed with primary schools to agree a suggested entitlement for children and young people across the district. This will be developed as a pilot in one of the pyramids of primary schools in the District by Easter 2007. It was agreed that parents also need to be involved in the delivery of SRE and how schools can support parents in this will be explored.

One of our Members of the Youth Parliament was also part of a discussion group at Westminster in June 2006 where he shared information with other MYPs from across the country with MPs. This information was fed back to Government.

Key outcomes

The first point to note is the shift in emphasis from Sex and Relationships Education to Relationships and Sex Education and this will be reflected in the new policy.

Improved Access To Quality Information

- Little Black Packs containing information on issues such as those relating to pregnancy, relationships and sexual orientation were distributed following consultation with young people on where they would like to get them.
- Yew Tree Theatre Company distributed the CHAD packs (Challenging Homophobia and HIV, Attitudes and Discrimination) to high schools on behalf of Mesmac in Wakefield. This pack contains a lot of useful information for schools that can be used in PSHE or Citizenship lessons.
- Young people were involved in the development of "Youth Fax – a rough guide for living". This is distributed to all year 10 and 11 students across the District (with the exception of Catholic schools).

Improved Delivery of Relationships and Sex Education

- Two new resource packs have been produced for teachers. The video and teaching pack called "R U Ready?" explores the pressures that young people can sometimes be under to have sex. The "Sundial Pack" is for teachers in year 6 and year 7 and helps teachers make the important links between alcohol and relationships education.
- External facilitators delivered a valuable training course looking at making SRE more relevant to boys and young men. The course was based on a resource called "Building Bridges".
- The "Get-away Boys" project has run a number of activities working in partnership with a number of colleagues across the District. This work is done with harder-to-reach boys and young men, learning about issues such as masculinity, plans for the future and young men's views on local sexual health services.
- Influenced sexual health providers in the delivery of SRE in different settings, for example young people contacted via the mobile unit were given the opportunity to explore issues around SRE in a residential setting, which was funded by teenage pregnancy. Long term funding is being explored through the Sexual Health Strategy.

Improved Quality Services

- Women under 18 can now get free emergency contraception from specially trained pharmacists working to an agreed set of guidelines.
- The “Parents as Peer Educators” project has rapidly developed, with volunteer parents running sessions for other parents on “talking with your children about growing up and sexual health”. Some of the High Schools and one primary school in the District have also had workshops run in their schools for parents as part of the project.
- Three high schools across the District have been involved in an innovative, new multi-agency pilot project called a “School Based Health Service”. This project run by the teenage pregnancy and healthy schools teams, aims to bring together different kinds of help and support for young people into one service based school site.
- The Young People’s Sexual Health Service is for young people under the age of 20. The Service runs Options Clinics in non-traditional settings, for example youth centres. Young people have been involved in the design of waiting areas in the Clinics.
- The Sexual Health Development Worker has produced a policy on Relationships and Sexual Health for foster carers and residential workers and implemented a training programme to ensure that they understand the policy. The worker has also run courses for young women around self-esteem.

Impact

As an example of how changes are starting to impact on a specific user we decided to use an example of how we influenced sexual health providers in the delivery of SRE in different settings by using work with young women and their personal and social education around sexual health.

Young women were accessing our services wanting information about sexual health. Some of the questions asked highlighted the need for more in-depth focused intervention that five minutes in a youth club or information point could address.

Some of the questions asked also raised issues around young women’s perception of relationships and what is “normal “ sexual practice.

As a result two workers started a group for young women that would help to dispel some of the myths, increase knowledge, as well as using a variety of different activities that would build confidence and self-esteem.

Several sessions to discuss issues of what young women want from a loving and trusting relationship, contraception and sexually transmitted Infections were implemented along with visits to local clinics for young people. At the end of the sessions the young women went on a residential and enjoyed activities that promoted independence, teamwork, confidence and self-esteem.

At the end of the project the young women evaluated their involvement and how better they felt being more informed.

From the comments received the young women were able to say how the project gave them confidence to say what they wanted from a relationship, ask others if they had a

problem, they were more informed about different contraceptive choices and where to go for help and information without feeling nervous or miss directed.

Resources

The major focus has been around influencing a change in culture in how Relationships and Sexual Education is delivered in our schools. This work has been ongoing for the last two years.

It is very difficult to ascertain costs involved as the progress made has in the main, been in officer time in supporting WakiesWatchDog in the first instance, working with them and other partners in ensuring the findings were recognised, then in schools and partner organisations to deliver the improvements.

There will be savings in the longer term with further reductions in the incidence of teenage pregnancies and STDs across the District.

Who was involved?

- WakiesWatchDog and Youth Workers undertaking the research.
- Wakefield District Partnership – who supported WakiesWatchDog to progress their findings and used their influence to ensure that the issues were addressed.
- Champion school governors who used their influence to ensure the changes in our schools were implemented.
- Teacher Advisor PSHE and Citizenship who provides a key link between the Youth Service and schools.
- Teenage Pregnancy Team from the Primary Care Trust.
- Young people involved as mystery shoppers on how young people friendly service provision is.

Barriers and how were they overcome

- There were barriers from some of the governing bodies initially who were happy to note the report but not implement any changes. This is being overcome by the Youth Service and Teacher Advisor PSHE developing a good practice document to ease the pressure on school heads and governing bodies, who were found to be misinformed with regards to the constantly changing legal requirements.
- Identifying a Champion School Governor is helping greatly with the change process.
- Some challenges still remain, for example in getting the message across to young people attending the Catholic schools. To address this, we will explore further the use of community-based publicity.

Critical success factors

- The fact that WakiesWatchDog were supported to produce research findings around the issues raised.
- The fact that Wakefield District Partnership was committed to addressing these issues and used their influence with the Council, PCTs and Governing Bodies.
- The fact that it was also identified as a priority by young people in the UKYP

elections.

- Committed officers in partnership organisations supporting the young people.
- The fact that this is a national issue, which has been raised with Central Government.

How would you do it better?

Community based publicity to promote the Options Clinics is a must and needs to be addressed as a priority.

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