



Project Proposal

Creative Change - Transitions

nesa

Project details and Project Team

- Start date: February 2007
- Completion date: July 2010
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- Partners names and contact detail:
- Robyn Pound, PCT Health Visitor, Grosvenor Surgery 01225 789024 and Fairfield Park Health Centre 01225 485529
- Susan Traill, Treasurer of London Road Partnership and Kensington Meadows Friends Group susan.traill@talktalk.net
- Marianne Rustad, Community Safety & Drugs Partnership
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- Adult and Community Learning: Jane Fell 01225 396192
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Project Description



Through creative arts, 'Transitions', will build self-awareness, self esteem and confidence, increasing social connections and enhancing family relationships. The project will teach socially isolated fathers new skills, where appropriate including their children, and move them from isolation to contributing positively to group work and taking responsibility for group commitment. It will also work with mothers to develop skills and opportunities.



Locality information

- Participant Profile:

- Primarily men and women aged 16 - 45
- Fathers have mental health needs
- Social isolation
- Fractured family relationships
- Single parents
- Experiences of racial difference
- Domestic violence and abuse
- Child protection Issues
- Ex-offenders
- Supporting young adults leaving care
- Social exclusion

- Geographic Area:

- Snow Hill area (majority Somer Housing tenants)
- Kensington Meadows area

Why is the Project Needed

Identified local needs and priorities the project will address:

- A high number of fathers are at home during the day on the Snow Hill estate. The health visitor has found many presenting with low mood or mental health issues that interfere with ability to work and family relationships
- Problematic drug and alcohol use- drugs initiatives involved
- Domestic violence and child abuse or neglect
- Ex-offenders
- All men experience increasing isolation, discouragement, relationship tensions and a sense of danger
- Fathers have no local facilities
- Many of the fathers identified for the 'fathers arts pilot project' had disengaged from other professional services such as probation and social services.

The Project is needed to:

- To move parents from being isolated individuals to contributing positively to group work and community life
- To build self awareness, self esteem and confidence in individuals
- A forum for discussing family relationships
- Bring about ownership of the area that the fathers live in
- To promote community spirit by creating a positive sense of community and local environs.
- To raise awareness of racism issues
- Make a greater feeling of safety within the area
- Link with other projects and resources to increase connections and create opportunities

Transitions will give men the opportunity to:

- **Engage with other professional services such as PCT, voluntary groups, probation and social services for more focused work**
- **Men, partners and children learnt new skills**
- **Engage in a creative group which has been piloted and found to be an acceptable method of engaging isolated men who are at home during the day**
- **Involve men in planning, decision making and developing further workshops (which would increase ownership of project)**
- **Give fathers respite from child care, life at home and other troubles and develop new interests in a non-judgemental environment.**
- **Progress from pilot project to other opportunities**
- The pilot art group showed eagerness for continuation of activity and learning new skills by men, partners and children
- Strengthen relationship with the health visitor leading to more focused work on relationships with children at home and in school



Outcomes/Outputs/Benefits

- 1. Supporting personal development
- 2. Strengthening family relationships
- 3. Creating a sense of community
(communities of interest, place, gender, people)
- 4. Skills development
- 5. Supported artistic expression
- 6. Agencies working together towards more targeted intervention
- 7. Health Improvements

Phases of the Transitions project

- **Phase 1:** [9 months – February – October 2007] **Consultation and engagement**
with local parents and organisations in BANES will lead to the design of creative projects that address local issues or personal concerns. The ethos of the projects will be on participant involvement, review and evaluation that will promote a sense of ownership and control of the project development. Taster sessions, picnics and days out where projects might address the physical landscape, provide a new approach to engaging people in lifelong learning, promote healthy living or target anti-social behaviour. The health visitor is key in building relationships with the Families and will support sessions. During this stage Adult and Community Learning will support taster sessions for fathers and crèche for children. **nesa** will be consolidating partnerships and setting up resource networks that will support neighbourhood development and personal skills development. Evaluation mechanisms will be set up to support sustainable development.
- **Phase 2:** [6 months - year – November – August 2008] **Involvement.** This phase will build on the initial experience of the group, encouraging parents to share ideas and begin to work together to develop and celebrate their unique community identity. A community plan that integrates creative arts activity with neighbourhood development, responding to local issues and priorities. The health visitor will continue to provide support to sessions and families and **nesa** will continue to provide expertise in arts development, support, development and training of artists working in community settings and maintain the resource networks that are vital to the integrated approach to the development of safer and stronger communities.
- **Phase 3:** (1-2 years - Sept – August 2009) **Connect.** A period of development and consolidation will enable group to continue to network and to develop projects that have a long term impact on their communities The period will be marked by involvement in community festivals, events or exhibitions that involve many different groups and promote dialogue, greater involvement in local democracy and community cohesion. To consider involving individuals as mentors. Projects will be encouraged and supported to share their achievements with other communities, involving them in rolling out opportunities to new areas within BANES and potentially regionally and nationally. To support men into other projects where relevant e.g. BADAS, DHI, horticulture group, acupuncture group, Community Learning, Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), Creative Links courses; College courses. To develop understanding of creative industries and models of self-employment (validating small achievements and supplementing income).

Review of first years engagement

● **What has happened:**

- 'Transitions' began as a Fathers Art project that running weekly in Snowhill, Bath from Sept – Dec 2006. A steering group planned and continued engagement with the men from Feb – July 2007. Community Learning Services began work with mothers on a weekly basis teaching new skills and extending opportunities.
- Susan Trail, local resident and Marianne Rustad, Community Safety joined the steering group
- An Art tour for fathers took place in May 07 during Bath Fringe Festival beginning conversations of future art projects.
- Family day out to the sea arranged for families.
- Community Learning funded and supported 5 engagement art sessions and a crèche during June and July 2007. Art forms included digital photography and computers, mud art, willow sculpture, storytelling,
- Fathers project engaged with between 1 and 6 men each session
- Project proposal developed and funding letters put together
- A Family Fun Day parents, many local children and other residents throughout August 07
- Proposed plans include a resident artist who may enable 'make-over's' in flats; the promotion of a café to enliven a heart centre into the community; involve the women's group and make the project for whole families; build on engagement to develop longer term community arts activities

Summary and Recommendations

- The taster sessions have continued to engage men and their families from the community
- Attendance is sporadic – previous experience doesn't necessarily mean people will come to the sessions. Individual issues prevent people from engagement.
- It is difficult to make a detailed 3 year plan as engagement with this client group is difficult. The steering group has responded to needs of the men and recognises the need for this to be a grass roots up project.
- **Recommendations:**
- Community Learning are continuing to support the Fathers Art Project providing 7 computer and manipulation sessions in the Autumn.
- The Steering group would like to engage the fathers and families with 2 regular consistent artists who build relationships and confidence in the men over time.
- Physical art forms attracted the most number of fathers at a session and this suggests that these be offered in the future eg Willow Sculpture.
- The Snow hill Fun Day on 1st September and the August engagement activities in banner making for families can be used as a way of promoting the project
- A model of successful engagement in the area is the Learning Champions model where participants are paid for their input and engagement. The steering group recognise that this model could be tried in the future
- To include fathers on the steering group
- To aim for an exhibition in May 2008 from art works and engagement during Autumn and Spring term which will be included in the Bath Fringe Festival

Willow Sculpture session

