

‘A Step in the Right Direction’

Report

1st January – March 2016

Introduction

This programme of A Step in the Right Direction began with less than 5 months funding. Following some lead in time to make contact with various organisations and professionals we were left with only three months to actually deliver the programme. Through various meetings and conversations it was decided that Ermine should be the delivery area as it was felt that Ermine often “missed out” on opportunities in favour of seemingly more deprived areas such as St Giles, Birchwood and Moorland.

The programme has evolved over time and has developed with a focus to provide participants with an emphasis on providing opportunity to ‘positively move on’ in some way in their lives. We work with people to identify any barriers which may be holding them back, then work with them to explore ways of addressing them. The programme ran from January to March 2016

The following report gives a summary of the programme.

Profile of participants

	18-24yrs	25-40yrs	41-64yrs	65yrs+	Totals
Female		5	1		6
Male		1			1
Totals		6	1		7

All those participants who chose to say considered themselves to be White British

Details at commencement of programme - some participants are counted more than once due to their circumstances.

Employed FT (30hrs+)	0	Parent of child with disabilities	2	Unemployed and available for work	3
Employed PT	0	Disclosure of sexual abuse	4	Training programme	0
Parents with childcare responsibilities	4	Carer (other than own children)	0	Sick / Disabled or presenting with mental health issue	5
Volunteer	0	Lone parents	7	Ex-offenders	0

Referrals and recruitment

Participation in 'Steps' is voluntary on the part of the participant. It is key that those who refer people to the programme have a clear understanding of the support that it offers, and part of the role of the 'Steps' worker is to ensure that the right information is given to the most appropriate person.

Disappointingly, only one participant on the programme came from being given information by another professional. He had been given a flyer by someone at the Children's Centre and told to contact the "STEPS" worker, which he did.

One person was recruited by the STEPS worker after an informal conversation at the Children's Centre

Most self-referrals came after the Steps worker began to deliver a "Looking After Yourself" group programme to women at Eve House (a women's refuge). After relationships developed and trust was gained and she became a 'familiar face', people were keen to engage in the programme.

Both Ermine Children's Centre and Eve House offered free meeting room space for one to one meetings to take place.

Networking

A number of consultation and networking events were attended, and various individuals met with to both publicise the project and to build up a network of organisations which may have been useful to participants, these included:

Events attended:

- Ermine East and Ermine West Neighbourhood Board Meetings
- Several meetings with staff at North Children's Centre
- Several staff meetings at Eve House

Individuals/Organisations met:

- Jayne Arnold – Children's Centre North
- Ermine Infants School
- Our Lady of Lincoln School

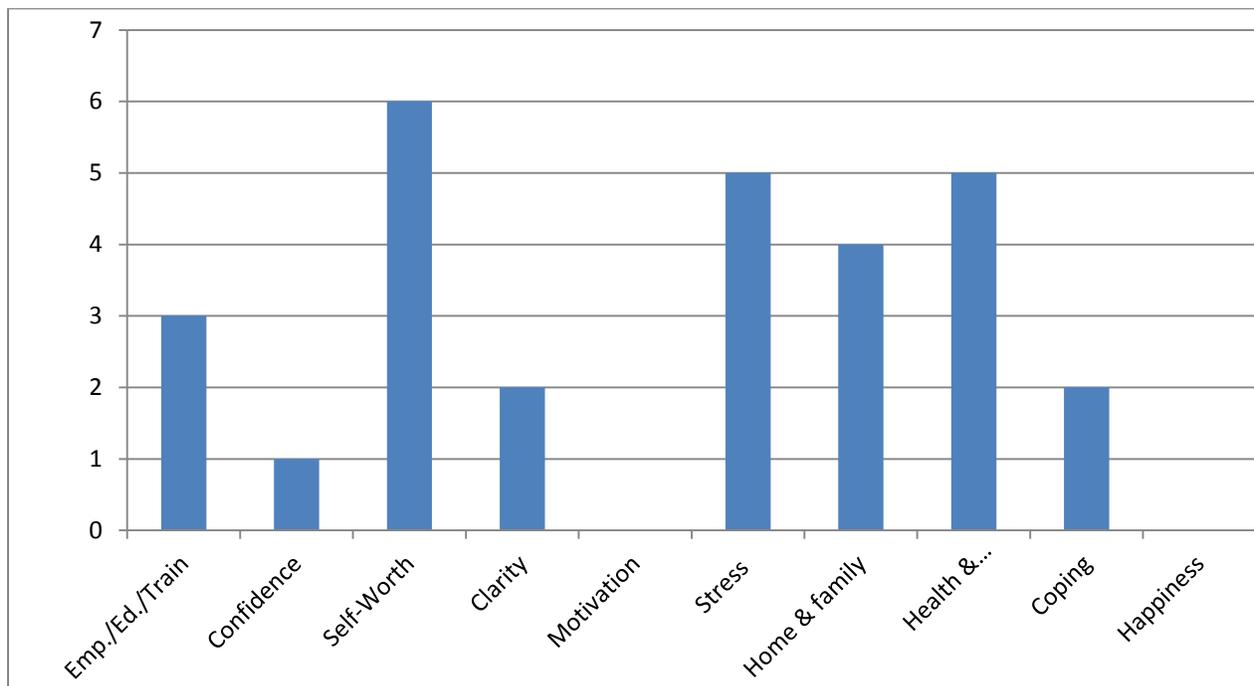
- Ermine Learning Communities
- Yarborough Leisure Centre
- Father Steven Hoy – St John the Baptist Church
- Noel Tobin – Neighbourhood Manager

The Process - Rickter

All participants in the programme first of all underwent a Rickter assessment. The Rickter Scale is a complete assessment and action planning process based around a hand-held interactive board, which is designed specifically to measure soft indicators and distance travelled. These are outcomes from training, support or guidance interventions such as increased confidence or better time management which, unlike hard outcomes such as qualifications and jobs, are likely to describe an individual’s journey rather than their destination. The tool provides the user with a point of focus and engages individuals very effectively, whilst encouraging them to take responsibility. With flexible one to one support, the individual can explore possibilities, make informed choices and set a realistic action plan. Ultimately the Rickter Scale demonstrates the genuine movement individuals make from a chaotic lifestyle to stability.

The graph below is produced from participant’s initial Rickter assessments done and shows how for the majority of participants the key barriers identified are self worth, stress, home and family and health and well-being.

Key Barriers Identified



Initial Rickter assessment provides the participant with a focus for exploration and action planning. It is at this stage that underlying issues begin to present themselves which can then be addressed and supported through goal setting and action planning. For participants they included:

- Employment, education and training
- Relationship issues
- Domestic abuse
- Historical sexual abuse
- Mental health and health in general
- Low self esteem
- Residency of children

Other issues and areas needing support included:

- Housing
- Not having any or enough “me time”
- Help with CV writing
- Form filling
- Job applications
- Money management and budgeting
- Healthy eating
- Parenting skills
- Anger management
- Online job search
- Past drug misuse
- Alcohol misuse
- Issues with weight being both under and over weight
- Eating disorders

Organisations signposted to

Where appropriate and possible, support was offered to participants in accessing other services, these included:

- Benefits advice at the City Council
- Courses at developmentplus
- Lincoln City Health Trainer
- Lincoln College
- Credit Union

- Butterflies
- GP
- Lincolnshire Rape Crisis

Aspirations and achievements

The nature of the programme allowed each participant to voice their aspirations and create their own path at a pace and direction appropriate to them. Aspirations included:

- Working with vulnerable people
- To go to college to learn how to do nail art with the view to getting a job
- Gaining qualifications
- To live a healthier life
- Wanting a job
- To get through a liver transplant
- Being self-employed

Participant Progress

A Step in the Right Direction encourages people to take responsibility for themselves, make decisions and take action. It provides an opportunity for people to take control of their lives. People are very keen to change, but for many, change means a different way of thinking and behaviour which requires sustained effort. For some the steps that they take are small and slow but in many cases represent a huge personal achievement. The amount of time spent on the programme was limited, especially those who did not start at the beginning. Some simply required information and advice while others needed longer term support to address and manage far reaching personal and emotional issues.

The table below gives some indication of new behaviours and actions that have led to more positive outcomes.

Outcome	Number	%
Actively job searching who were not previously	1	
Entering volunteering opportunities	1	
Attending new training opportunity	5	

Beneficiaries entering employment	1	
Beneficiaries accessing services signposted/referred through project	4	
Beneficiaries engaging with Health Trainer	4	
Accessing GP for issue identified during programme	4	
Death	1	

Difficulties encountered and Recommendations

Whilst organisations and other professionals seemed to be keen on the idea of STEPS, apart from one person there were no referrals and only one enquiry.

Whilst it took some time to get a foot in the door at Eve House, once in, both the Looking After Yourself Course and STEPS was well received by both staff and residents.

Due to the short time frame it was not possible for all participants to achieve their desired outcomes in the time available, and sadly one participant died whilst waiting for a liver transplant

Conclusion

Despite the shortness of the programme, nonetheless most participants moved on in some way. All participants still have some distance to travel in terms of achieving their goals. However, time was spent exploring future options, taking “small steps” but nonetheless making significant achievements, and ensuring that they felt comfortable in where to go and what to do next. Lots of effort was put in to ensure that these people didn’t feel “abandoned” and were encouraged and supported to participate in a number of training courses at developmentplus which in itself has offered ongoing support.

Without exception, all participants said that they had benefitted from being involved in the programme.

Denise Benetello
March 2016