

Portadown Gets Active Youth Summer Programme July - August 2017

Background

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership with partner agencies; Children in Northern Ireland, Reserve Forces and Cadets Association Northern Ireland / Pathway Activities NI, Oasis Youth Project, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council, NIACRO, Public Health Agency and Brakes NI recently supported and hosted a holiday hunger programme in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust Area.

The programme built upon the 2016 "Making it Happen" conference on child poverty and the pilot Kilkeel Gets Active Youth Summer Programme in August 2016. The Portadown Gets Active Programme was an opportunity for a partnership approach to address the growing concern of holiday hunger during school holiday periods in Northern Ireland and will mark the beginning of an annual response to holiday hunger concerns in Portadown.

The aim of the programme was to support families (primarily those families with children who are in receipt of free school meals) overcome the difficulties experienced during school holiday closure times. The programme took place over the months of July and August in a local primary school, Presentation Primary School and involved the provision of a healthy breakfast and lunch, continued summer learning through an OCN accredited education programme in healthy living, basic first aid and physical activity team games. The programme will continue at Halloween, Christmas and Easter school holiday closure periods.

Pauline Leeson, CEO of Children in Northern Ireland spoke from the programme stating "For some families, particularly those who receive free school meals, the school holidays It's not just the increase in food cost but the pressures associated with keeping children active".

Since the delivery of the Portadown Gets Active Programme, CYPSP have endorsed the need to address holiday hunger in Northern Ireland. A regional task and finish group has been formed to develop consistency in a model to support families and address holiday hunger collectively in Northern Ireland.

Making a contribution to the following High Level Outcomes for children

All Children and Young People are healthy

All Children and Young People Enjoy, Learn and Achieve

All Children and young people contribute to their community and society



How much did we do?

A total of **11 hours of physical activity** were completed over the three week programme equating to a minimum of **2 hours per day per person** of fitness including: Team Building Games and Endurance Activities including Climbing Tower , Bungee Run, Football and Inflatable Obstacle Course and Fitness Endurance Bleep Tests

A total of **6 Breakfast sessions** catered to 55 young people per day = **330 breakfasts** provided that included healthy cereals, toast and fruit. (Note: some young people brought their own breakfast to the programme)

4 Make Lunch Sessions (6hours) were facilitated by a trained chef from Pathways and a chef from Education Authority with the participants alongside the provision of two hot meals during the programme. Meals included; healthy wraps, spaghetti bolognese, pasta salad and potatoes, meat and vegetables

A total of **17 hours study per person** was spent completing an OCN Accredited Health and Hygiene programme

A total of **12 hours study per person** of Mini Medics First Aid was delivered over the three weeks of the programme

720 volunteering hours were contributed to the programme from 20 peer mentors and an **additional 36 hours** from volunteers



How well did we do It?

- A partnership of 8 or more agencies was established to address holiday hunger in the Portadown area including CYPSP, Children in Northern Ireland, SHSCT, Oasis Youth Project, PHA, EA, local council and many more...
- Total of 81 young people including 60 aged 8-12years registered and attended the programme & 21 peer mentors aged 12-17years supported the programme's delivery.
- Drop out rate of approx. 10 of 60 young people (16%) over the four weeks due to reasons including lack of engagement, illness, health appointments etc.
- The programme demonstrated the social benefits / effectiveness of hosting a summer programme in a local school during school holiday periods
- 65% of 20staff who completed the staff evaluations scored the programme 4/5 = Good (20% reported the programme was OK, 5% reported Poor & 10% reported Very Good)
- Communication and Publicity of the Programme:
 - Twitter reached over 13,211 people, received over 76 retweets and 62 likes
 - Facebook reached over 940 people
 - Three media pick up's via newspapers; including Belfast Live and Irish News



Is anyone better off?

SOCIAL OUTCOMES

- 79% of young people enjoyed taking part on the programme in the school grounds
- 81% of young people aged 8-12years made new friends on the programme
- 53% of young people enjoyed all aspects of the programme; cooking, physical activities and learning
- 58% of young people said they would like to do more team challenges and outdoor activities
- 40% of peer mentors requested additional support for issues including mental wellbeing, bullying, body image and exam stress/doing well at school. This has been put in place
- A total of 720 Millennium Award volunteering hours were contributed to the programme from Peer Mentors
- Young people from 18 primary schools from the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon area participated on the programme

COOKING OUTCOMES

- 100% of young people developed new skills and confidence in the kitchen: the ability to prepare and chop vegetables and follow cooking instructions
- 100% of young people demonstrated a better routine of preparing and eating together at meal times in the home
- 76% of young people reported that they enjoyed trying new foods including fruit and vegetables during the programme

CONTINUED LEARNING - OCN ACCREDITED AWARD OUTCOMES

- 21 peer mentors (100%) received OCN accredited Peer Mentoring Awards of which 86% of peer mentors reported a positive experience with 75% noting an increase in confidence and ability to motivate a group of young people
- 71% of peer mentors reported an increase in knowledge of a peer mentoring role since completing the programme with most useful topics including child protection, understanding confidentiality and exploring boundaries
- 38 young people (63%) received OCN accredited Healthy Living Awards of which demonstrating an understanding on the importance of keeping a kitchen and bathroom clean, personal hygiene and how to stay healthy upon completion of the learning module. 13 young people (22%) aged 8 – 12 years received attendance certificates for participating in the programme
- 100% of young people recognise the importance of personal fitness, a healthy diet and how the contribute to a healthy lifestyle
- 58 young people (97%) completed the basic first aid mini medics course during the summer programme of which 85% of young people said they enjoyed the programme and felt more confident in responding to an emergency situation of checking breathing, applying the recovery position / CPR techniques, calling for help and assisting to a wound or cut.



Preparing healthy meals in the kitchen



58 of 60 children complete mini medics first aid



Young people shared their views on the programme each day

Is anyone better off?

Positive Feedback From Participants, Parents and Staff

Confidence has improved – would never have gone out on his own but was getting the bus every day on his own which he would never have done before - Parent

Kids enjoyed mini medics as it was interactive – Peer Mentor

We enjoyed the fun day activities. We could play with our new friends on all the activities like the climbing wall and assault course! – Young person



Team Challenge at Presentation Primary School

The peer mentors were an excellent model for support that should be maintained! - Staff

Wisdom Tree was good way to evaluate the programme with the young people – Staff member

I now have more confidence to know how to help keep children safe – Peer Mentor



Hugh McCaughey, SEHSCT and Chair of CYPSP participating in archery

We noticed big change for the better when he was occupied. He wants to attend Oasis and has expressed interest in getting involved with Pathways. Shows his mum the mini medics certificate and kept it in his room - Parent

Some children needed more encouragement - Different foods & games - Staff

It was good to get her brain working over the summer. Was very impressed with the Mini Medics - Parent



Peer mentors got involved in the Portadown Gets Active short video production with Children in Northern Ireland

Watch the short video of the programme at;

www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSPSX1yuTN4&feature=youtu.be