

## Evaluation works undertaken by the Centre for Social Action in the UK:

**Howard League, U R Boss evaluation** - U R Boss is part of the Howard League for Penal Reform. It is an innovative youth justice project that provides an enhanced legal service shaped by and for young people in custody and those recently released into the community. Funded by the Big Lottery for 5 years, U R Boss provides a national programme of participation opportunities and support for young people. U R BOSS is a project led by young people aged 10-24 years old for young people that are or have been involved in the criminal justice system and may have been in some form of custody (2010-14)

Hine J, Fleming J and Smith R (2012) [Embedding Participation](#) London: The Howard League

Smith R and Fleming J (2011) [Welfare + Rights: An interim evaluation report into the Howard League's legal service for children and young people](#) London: The Howard League

**Nottingham City Council, evaluation of SupportNet** - Evaluation of the a programme to encourage community involvement in the Putting People First agenda in 2 communities in Nottingham.

Fleming J (2010) [SupportNet evaluation report](#)

**Participation Works evaluation** – managing the evaluation of Participation Works which aims to support voluntary organisations to actively involve children and young people in all aspects of designing, delivering and evaluating services that affect their lives, in order to successfully meet their needs. (£51 450, 2008/2010)

### **Regional Evaluation of the Pacesetters Programme (PACEVAL)**

Jennie Fleming is part of a team lead by Mark Johnson (Mary Seacole Research Centre) who have won a contract to evaluate the NHS Pacesetters programme for the East Midlands region.

The Pacesetters Programme is a partnership between local communities who experience health inequalities, the NHS and the Department of Health. The overall aim of the programme is to deliver equality and diversity improvements and innovations resulting in:

- Patient and user involvement in the design and delivery of services;
- Reduced health inequalities for patients and service users;
- Working environments that are fair and free of discrimination.

The evaluation is being carried out by Mark Johnson, Lorraine Culley, Jennie Fleming, Nicky Hudson and Fenglin Guo and will run until October 2009.

### **Celebrating young people's grant giving**

The Centre was invited to evaluate the level and extent of young people's participation in the DfES led competition – Actions Speak Louder. ASL built on the experience of young people in developing and funding innovative projects through the Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) and Youth Capital Funds (YCF). Panels of young people in local authorities in England were invited to nominate a youth project funded under YOF/YCF which could be expanded and replicated more widely, to be judged by a panel of young people brought together and supported by the National Youth Agency. Local authorities were given grants of £6,000 to organise local celebrations of YOF youth projects to share good practice

As all aspects of the competition were youth led this approach was also adopted for the evaluation. The Centre worked with a group of young people who attended a residential evaluation workshop during which they developed their skills as young evaluators, devised the question schedules and agreed the people who should be included. The evaluation team included adults as well as the young people who then conducted face-to-face interviews with adults and young people, using the questions developed at the workshop.

Centre staff also carried out telephone interviews and compiled the final report, which drew together the evidence showing the extensive degree of youth participation achieved by the YOF/ASL grant giving process both locally and nationally and the extent to which it had changed the perceptions and youth engagement practices of elected members and local authority officers. Report

### **Actions Speak Louder**

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This whole process was evaluated with young people agreeing the survey questions and taking part in the interviewing in authorities who were both winners and runners up, alongside adults. Local authority lead officers, young judges, project workers, youth workers and councillors in 29 authorities were interviewed and focus groups were run with the national judging panel. (2007) Report

## **Leicester Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Strategy**

The Centre was commissioned by the Leicester Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Partnership Board to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy developed by the Board to achieve the government target of reducing the numbers of unwanted teenage conceptions in the city by 50% in 2010. In the first phase of the study research staff interviewed managers and practitioners with a city wide remit to work on this issue. In the second phase, a group of peer researchers were recruited and trained to interview and do group sessions with young people in schools and youth centres in two target areas to gather their views about the SRE lessons they received at school and on what kind of services in the community they would find helpful. Young people from black and minority ethnic youth groups were also interviewed. In addition, practitioners working with young people were interviewed about the effectiveness of the services available, and parents were questioned about their views on the lessons and services available to their children. The findings and recommendations will have major implications for the future work of the Leicester City Children and Young People's Partnership. (2006) Phase 1: ReportPhase 2: Report

## **Bedfordshire Children's Fund**

The Centre was awarded a contract by the Bedfordshire Children's Fund to carry out an evaluation of their local projects over a 18 month period. The projects concerned, which were aimed at children and young people, included nurture groups, YIPs, mentoring and school –based projects. Centre staff supported the projects to carry out their own participative evaluation which was designed to assess the extent to which Children's Fund projects were making a difference and the lessons to be learnt from the initiative. Centre researchers took on the role of supporting project staff to carry out evaluations of their own projects and also collected information directly from children and young people. They facilitated workshops with project staff exploring evaluation tools and techniques and supported staff to devise the type of evaluation indicators which were appropriate for the kind of work they did. Centre staff emphasised the importance of involving children and young people in the evaluation in the work they did with project staff and they independently ran workshops with young people to devise questionnaires which could measure their achievement of the Every Child Matters outcomes in ways they could identify. A number of discussion groups were organised with children, young people and parents at the end of the project to gather their impressions of the work of each project. Centre staff also conducted an overarching evaluation of identified themes from all the projects especially on children's participation. (2005/6) Report

## **Derby Integrating Children's Services Lead Professional role**

The Centre was commissioned by the Information Sharing and Assessment/Common Assessment Framework (ISA/CAF)/Steering Group – an interagency body involving Health and the major children's services in Derby, to evaluate the impact of the new Lead Professional role, which was being trailed in the Osmaston/Allenton Children's Centre area of Derby City . This aimed to work with

children aged 0-11 years old and their families, in conjunction with local primary schools and nurseries, health and Sure Start staff. The key functions of the Lead Professional are to act as a single point of contact that children, young people and families can trust, to support them in making choices and in navigating their way through the system and to reduce overlap and inconsistency from other agency workers. The information gathering was undertaken by a group of three women who had previously taken part in the Derby SRB 5 research and a total of 12 families, 11 lead professionals and 12 other professionals were interviewed. (2006) Report

### **DerbySRB5**

The Centre was commissioned by Derby City Council to work together with Sure Start in Osmaston and Allenton to evaluate residents' perceptions of the impact of SRB 5 funding in the area. The project has involved recruiting, training and supporting local residents to undertake interviews with local residents and groups on the impact of the SRB funding in this area of Derby . (2005)

### **Meden Valley Sure Start**

The Centre, working with colleagues from the Youth Affairs Unit at De Montfort University, was commissioned to be the local evaluators of Meden Valley Sure Start in North Nottinghamshire . The researchers worked with groups of parents to develop their skills and knowledge around evaluation and this group has evaluated the Stay and Play sessions through interviews with other parents. Further research has involved working with Sure Start to undertake community consultations in new areas concerning the development of the Children's Centre, how to involve children in evaluation, and an evaluation of the ante-natal and preparation for parenthood services for new parents in the area. (2005-6)

### **Victim and Witnesses Action Group**

The Centre, in partnership with the Community and Criminal Justice Research Unit, conducted an evaluation of the work of the Victims and Witnesses Action Group which is part of the Crime and Disorder Partnership in Leicester city. The evaluation was particularly focusing on the impact that the initiative is having on the services and support for victims and witnesses of crime. In addition, the evaluation explored the kind of needs people working with victims and witnesses had in order to deliver an effective service i.e. training provisions and access to information. As part of the work a survey of staff working in agencies supporting victims and witnesses has been carried out, in connection with a feasibility study about the need for a directory of services for victims and witnesses. (2005)

### **National Youth Agency - Global Youth Work Project**

The Global Youth Work Project was a three year project funded by the Department for International Development (DfID) based at the National Youth Agency (NYA), which aimed to improve the awareness of global issues on the part of local authority

youth service managers and practitioners and to increase the amount of targeted youth work with young people on this theme.

Some youth services were supported to develop new policies and practices in this field and a website and newsletter devoted to the subject were circulated widely. The Centre was asked to evaluate the project and carried out an interim evaluation in 2005 and a final one in 2006. Members of the Advisory Committee, project staff and youth work managers and practitioners were interviewed and users of the website and newsletter were surveyed via a web based questionnaire. (2004/2006)

### **Positive Futures (Gedling PCT)**

Positive Futures Healthy Living Centre, sponsored by Gedling PCT, is about changing lifestyles and widening life choices for people with learning difficulties. The Centre for Social Action was commissioned to support the Healthy Living Evaluation Sub-group, in order to facilitate the evaluation work required to measure progress against the stated objectives and targets of the project. Centre workers designed and agreed methods of evaluation and Healthy Living Centre staff received training in social capital principles and agreed evaluation methods. There was support for staff in implementing the evaluation tools, analysing the results and preparing evaluation reports. CSA staff also provided an objective assessment of the evaluation work completed each year with recommendations for improvements. (2003-05)

### **YouthBankUK**

YouthBank is a young person led organisation, with projects around N Ireland , Scotland , England and Wales which give grants to young people for activities they have identified. The Centre was commissioned to evaluate the impact of YouthBank activity on young people and identify the key factors leading to success. Young people guided and steered the research - discussing what issues and questions needed to be addressed - and agreed who should be involved in the evaluation. Information was collected from groups of young people in Northern Ireland , Scotland and England . (2003)

### **Community Investment, Boots - Time for a Treat**

A six-month contract to evaluate a multi-agency project entitled Time for a Treat, involving the PCT, New College Nottingham, Boots. This aims to make a positive contribution to the physical and emotional well-being of groups such as Asian women, young mothers, crime victims and in-patients, through fortnightly complementary therapy sessions at Nottingham City Hospital . The Centre's role was to evaluate the project from the point of view of all stakeholders. (2002)

### **Leicestershire Youth Offending Mentoring Project and Wandsworth Borough Council - Mentoring Scheme**

These projects are part of a number funded by the Youth Justice Board (YJB). They were being centrally evaluated by Surrey University and the Centre was the local evaluator for these projects. The project recruits, trains and supports volunteers to

act as mentors to young people who have received a final warning for their offending. (2001-2002)

### **Nottinghamshire County Council Black Families Audit**

The Centre was commissioned to undertake a survey of a sample of black families who had received a service from Nottinghamshire Social Services, as part of the Department's audit of services. (2001)

### **Leicester Education Action Zone**

The Centre carried out an evaluation of the impact of the parent link workers deployed in seven schools in the Zone and elicit the views of parents, school staff, key organisational stakeholders and of course the pupils themselves, on the initiative (2001)

### **NCH Action for Children (West Notts Indep. Project)**

The Centre did an evaluation of this service by NCH in 1995/7 and were asked to do a second evaluation of the project from the young people's point of view. The project provides support to young homeless people and care leavers in North Nottinghamshire . (2000)

### **Early Evaluation Work:**

#### **Derbyshire Best Value**

As part of their 'Best Value Pilot' the Centre was commissioned by Derbyshire Social Services to interview children and young people who were looked after by the authority in January 1999, together with their parents or carers. The aim was to find out what they thought of the process (1999)

#### **NCH Action for Children**

The Family Mediation Service, funded by Derbyshire Probation and Social Services Department in partnership with NCH, works with separated parents to help them resolve difficulties and come to agreements which are in the best interests of their children. An evaluation of the project from a service users' perspective was conducted. (1997)

### **NCH Action for Children (West Notts )**

A research contract to evaluate the West Notts Independence Preparation Project, from the service users' perspective. This is a project which supports young people who experience homelessness and those leaving care. (1995/7)

### **NCH Action for Children (Derbyshire)**

A research contract to evaluate the Youth Reach project in Derbyshire which supports care leavers and families with teenagers, to avoid them having to be accommodated in care by the local authority in Derbyshire. (1995/7)

### **Nottingham Social Services Department and NCH Action for Children**

On going monitoring and evaluation of the Radford Shared Care Project taking into account the views of users, sponsors, managers and workers. The Shared Care Project provides support to parents where there are concerns about the level of care they give their children. (1991-7)

### **NCH Action for Children**

NCH Action for Children engaged the Centre to carry out an evaluation of the Nottingham Child and Family Counselling Service, a project for children who have experienced sexual abuse. (1996)

### **Bradford Social Action Projects 1st and 2nd Year Evaluation**

Evaluations of the first and second year's work of three Department of Education funded youth crime reduction projects, run and managed by Bradford Youth and Community Service, on three housing estates in the Bradford conurbation. The research has contributed to Bradford adopting a social action/peer education philosophy across all its youth work practice. (1993/5)

### **St Basils Centre, Birmingham**

Monitoring and evaluation of the Birmingham Young Homeless Resettlement Project. This is part of the Department of Health Young Homeless Initiative and is one of the largest constituent projects. The monitoring and evaluation incorporated sponsors, managers, workers and young people's perspectives and contributed to the evaluation of the initiative nationally, co-ordinated by the Community Projects Foundation. The research led to an orientation of the project towards placing the participation of the youth users at its core. (1991/4)