

## **Key findings**

### **Key Findings 1 - Establishing and validating the need for Keepin' it Real**

The need for extra curricula self-esteem project using the Kepin it Real methods and approach has been established by the Pilot Project. This was demonstrated by the readiness of those who joined the team, the active participation of the two schools Kelvin Hall and Newland and most of all from the participants. The eagerness with which the young people gave up their free time and the way in which they participated confirms that 'the need is there'. Subsequent interest from other schools, organisations and agencies enforces the need for its continuation and development.

### **Keepin' it Real/Project Team**

The interest shown by the initial team members from a variety of education, health, social services and youth organisations and agencies demonstrated that 'self-esteem' was – is – an issue for young people and affects all aspects of their lives. The need for a Project to complement any existing work was also acknowledged.

### **Meeting a need and demand at Kelvin Hall and Newland schools**

Kelvin Hall and Newland Schools both welcomed Keepin' it Real with open arms. Both replied to the introductory letter within five working days. Keepin' it Real was seen as a complementary means of meeting the needs of pupils. *'At Kelvin we realise that lack of self-esteem has a big impact on learning and ultimately on pupils happiness. At our school we set great store by pastoral support, but we also understand that there are limits to what we can achieve ourselves'*. (Learning Mentor)

### **Meeting an identified need**

Both schools demonstrated a clear understanding of the impact of self-esteem on young people's health and personal development. The importance of looking 'right', peer pressure, confused ideas about rights and responsibilities, changing family structures, academic pressures and media led demands contribute to their pupil's insecurities and stresses. At Kelvin, this has resulted in a big increase in the number of self-harm and eating disorders and the 'twagging' of Physical education by those with poor body image. Both schools could think of certain pupils 'straight away' who would benefit

### **Enhancing and complementing existing provision**

Both schools saw Keepin' it Real as complementary to the curriculum and to the pastoral support provided often in partnership with other agencies. This included the Learning Mentors and their Lunchtime Drop in at Kelvin, School Nurse, Mental Health Project, Befriending Project, and Alternatives to 'traditional' Physical Education, 'Sexual Education' Special Session and Health Day.

### **Keepin' it Real - A Different approach to supporting young people**

Both schools felt *'there can never be too much support'* (Newland Head of PSE). They welcomed Keepin' it Real as a different and interesting way to engage young people and explore issues. The schools were attracted by the approach and all the core elements of the Project, in particular group activity and learning.

### **Developing and sustaining support for young people.**

Both schools hoped that Keepin' it Real would develop into longer-term initiatives. Kelvin hoped Keepin' it Real would assist the development of the support provided by Learning Mentors and Newland hoped for the development of an 'after school' club, building on their initial contact with the Youth Council.

The interest in Keepin' it Real from other schools wishing to be involved has confirmed the need and demand for the continuation and extension of Keepin' it Real. (See below).

### **Young Peoples Participation**

The numbers self selecting to give up their free time, girls and boys, exceeded our expectations. *'We usually find pupils are only so enthusiastic about group projects if it involves getting out of lessons'* Kelvin Learning Mentor. Kelvin Girls Spring Course had 18 participants with an average of per session 15. Kelvin Boys Summer 18, Average 15, Newland Girls Spring 12 dwindled to 6, Kelvin Girls Autumn 24 (2 x groups of 12). In addition, participants arrived on time and were not keen to leave at the end of sessions!

Keepin' it Real attracted boys as well as girls – particularly pleasing being the boys who participated at Kelvin Hall. Participants came from many different tutor groups

The self-selection process resulted in participants being from a mixture of social backgrounds, and with different academic abilities. Keepin' it Real also succeeded in attracting those with a 'variety' of self-esteem and confidence levels – not simply those 'most readily identifiable'. At Kelvin, less than a quarter of the participants had been, or were being mentored. Facilitators felt that all the participants 'had a right, a need to be there' and that all bar a few individuals 'jumped at the opportunity' to open up and to participate in group activities. Whilst numbers are important, it is crucial not to ignore the needs of a few. Although 'only' five chose to participate in the Away Day, it was vital that the day still took place for those arguably 'most in need'. The three boys were unable to 'think of a friend who might like to come'.

Keepin' it Real success is measured not simply by the number of the participants, but also by the nature of their participant. In the words of a facilitator *'They were very open. They took a lot of risks'*.

Participants all courses *'would do it again and want more!' 'I wouldn't even dream of not doing it again. I give it '10/10' (Kelvin Girl Spring).*

## **Key Finding 2**

### **Identifying the concerns and interests of young people.**

Enabling young people to choose the topics they wished to explore provided a useful insight into their lives, 'Research in Action'. The groups had different issues and concerns, although there were some common themes.

#### **Kelvin Year 8 Girls Spring Course**

Participants wished to cover all topics – and found it hard choosing which order. All topics were covered.

Fifty percent of evaluation forms cited 'Family' as favourite topic, which 'cropped up as a recurring theme'. (Facilitator) They enjoyed '*finding out things about my friend's family that I didn't know*' and '*remembering the people we forgot*'. Participants seemed to gain a sense of identity and belonging from the Family Tree exercise which was particularly popular. Other favourite topics were bullying, friends, flower of things you liked, drugs, and 'list of problems and we discussed what we'd do'.

#### **Kelvin Girls – Autumn Course**

The 'problems' participants chose to explore were wide ranging – sex, boys, bullying, drinking, smoking, drugs, arguments, sexuality, self harm, death, eating disorders, body piercing. 'Sexuality arose frequently with issues around lesbianism' and 'Sexual health activities and discussion were the most popular'. Periods 'kept coming up in conversations and discussions' (Facilitators).

#### **Newland School for girls - Promotional 'Bodies' Exercise.**

The twenty-five bodies created are a particularly colorful and arresting depiction of the multifaceted aspects of the lives of 160 young women. The topics chosen were Stress 8; Appearance 5; Friends 4; Family 3, Miscellaneous 5. (Includes those not readily identifiable as particular topic and two stuck together). Photographs of six bodies and a fuller summary of the content are included in Appendix 1 – 6.

#### **Stress**

This was the most popular topic. The main sources of stress were school; appearance; family; boyfriends; bullying and 'types of people' for example 'people who lie'. Sex as stressful and threatening was evident in many of the 25 bodies - even 'creeping into' generally more positive bodies about family.

Participants also demonstrated their awareness of how young people respond to the stresses, including '*(stress) drinking problems.... Swearing through stress*'. *Putting on weight through stress*.

### **Appearance**

The pressures of needing to look good to feel good included concerns about weight, make up, clothes, hair, teeth and eyes. Money and mobile phones featured, as did the many cuttings of brand names. Methods to improve looks included cosmetic surgery.

### **Friends**

The importance of friendship was very clearly expressed. *'Girls at our age need friends' 'You need friends at a time like this' 'you need them as much as they need you'.* There are many benefits of friendship - caring, supportive, safety, and fun, and difficulties *'Friends come and go' 'Sometimes its hard to stay loyal' 'Friends can be cruel but they can be nice'.* The girls also expressed the pressure to have *'the right friends'* and to *'never mix with the wrong crowd'.*

### **Family**

Overall, the bodies relating to family were very positive. *'Families are priceless... Family is better than any CD or game. Love your family and they love you back'.* There were a few mentions of annoying siblings, disagreements and embarrassments. However, amongst these positive statements one young person had written *'I haven't seen my mum for two years. My mum is missing, I live with my dad and big brother'*

### **Newland Girls Course**

The four sessions that followed the Bodies Promotional and Self-selection meetings concentrated mainly on sex, periods, and pregnancy. One session considered bullying and homophobia.

### **Kelvin Boys**

Participants expressed no preference for particular topics other than not wanting a drugs session. They wanted to know about facilities and activities for young people 'Body Exercise' identified school and especially teachers as the major cause of stress, along with girls, family and *'people shouting at you'.*

### **Topics for future Courses: Suggestions Kelvin Girls (spring)**

The majority of participants felt that they were satisfied with what had been covered, including one who said *'for the amount of time we had I think we went really deep into things. I understood what we talked about'.*

Suggested topics for inclusion in future courses were

- *Safety at parties and clubs*
- *Jobs and holidays in the future...*
- *What could be done to help the planet?*
- *Subjects at school...*
- *Aromatherapy...exercise...some fitness activities.*

### **Key Finding 3 - Developing young people's self-esteem**

#### **In the words of participants**

Young people have shown a good understanding of their personal development during Keepin' it Real. In the words of a Kelvin Hall teacher *'It is important that kids are more aware, can spot things and change things'*.

Many participants felt they had learnt a great deal. *'A lot. Not to bully others. Take care of our family. To look after yourself and to be confident and not to take drugs'*. Other participants highlighted particular aspects of their personal development. Examples of evaluation sheets are included in the Appendices 7 - 13. The following is an attempt to group the responses from all five courses.

#### **'Individual' self-development**

- **Feel good about ourselves**

The 'Jelly Bean People' evaluation sheets completed by Kelvin Girls Spring Course provide a clear visual depiction of progression from first to final session. Each participant placed herself 'at the bottom/hiding', all ended 'higher up' 'up in the tree'.

Newland Girls' responses to the question 'How do you feel now?' were *'Fab...Great...Super...Brill'* - and *'I feel great about myself I feel more confident' 'Gr8!'*

- **Sense of self**

For Newland Girls, this feeling of confidence was linked to pride in being female. *'I feel more confident and proud to be a girl'*.

The Kelvin Hall Girls (spring) particularly liked the Family Tree activity, which developed their sense of identity and belonging.

- **Information/Awareness**

The importance of information and awareness in the development of self-esteem raising was evident in all courses.

*'I learnt everything I need to know! Periods. Puberty. Fun.... Boys.. Eating...Problems'* (Kelvin Girl Autumn).

*'I learnt about people getting bullied and peoples family'* (Kelvin Girl Spring)

*'About family and life'* (Kelvin Girl Spring)

*'I feel a lot better now my questions are answered. Now I'm proud of being a girl'* (Newland Girl)

## **Keepin' it Real - Self-esteem and Young People - Pilot Project**

- **Confidence in making choices and dealing with problems.**

Information and the opportunity to discuss concerns and choices enabled participants to develop confidence in dealing with their lives.

*'I have learnt to deal with problems like the ones we covered if I ever came across them.'* (Kelvin Girl Spring)

*'I like discussing the issues of life and what to do in these situations.'* (Newland Girl)

*'Speaking with other people and finding out how to cope with friends problems and it helps when you've had a stressful day.'* (Newland Girl)

### **Relationships and Social skills.**

The inner self-esteem and confidence to cope with problems interconnected with the relationship participants experienced with others.

- **Being able to confide in and share things with others**

*'I feel great about myself I feel more confident and that I can tell people stuff'* (Newland Girl)

*'Don't be afraid to show your feelings.... It helps get your feelings off your chest'* (Kelvin Girl Autumn)

- **Thinking about other people**

*'I've learnt to respect people a bit more'* (Kelvin Girl Spring)

*'About how other people feel'* (Kelvin Girl Spring)

- **Valuing relationships**

*'The importance of family and friends'* (Kelvin Girl Spring)

*'To value friendship and family'* (Kelvin Girl Spring)

- **Social skills – communication with and support of others**

*'I have learnt a lot like how to talk to people who I don't know'* (Kelvin Girl-Spring)

*'How to become a group and share and give ideas'* (Kelvin Girl -Spring)

*'My favorite subject was 'family' because everyone was very supportive to each other'* (Kelvin Girl Spring)

### **Improvement of participants self-esteem – comments from school staff**

- **Kelvin Boy more assertive**

*'CD seems a little more self confident and slightly less sensitive than earlier. He seems to be interacting a little more with the 'quieter' members of the form. He tends to be picked on because of his 'Harry Potter' appearance but seems to be coping better with these situations and seems to be more self assertive than in the past.'* (Tutor)

## **Keepin' it Real - Self-esteem and Young People - Pilot Project**

- **Kelvin Girl taking more care of her health and personal appearance**

*'One large year 8 girl with little self confidence blossomed over the course of five weeks. She began to wear make up, take more interest in her hair, clothes and skin and as a result of one of the sessions, she started a healthy eating programme. The difference in how she feels about herself is apparent ... Teachers have commented how much quieter she is.... (She) has calmed down.'* (Learning Mentor)

- **Developing friendships**

*'S' writing out invitations for a birthday party ... invitations for people sat around her ... I think it's the first party she has ever had'*

*'I have seen an improvement in the lads especially (5 names) who are now talking to other kids'* (Learning Mentor Kelvin Hall)

- **Confidence to go on to do other things**

*'I now see faces at the Dinner Time Drop in who didn't have the confidence to come before...'* (Learning Mentor)

### **Key Findings 4 - Demonstrating the success of the Keepin' it Real approach and methods**

#### **What young people say about the Keepin' it Real Project**

Asked for their opinions on how Keepin' it Real could be improved Kelvin Girl's responded *'How can you improve the best?' And 'just keep it the same and everyone will enjoy it!' "Thanks for opening Keepin' it Real. I had a good time... They are all great. They don't need improving.'*

*'Hooray'* was the phrase used to summaries Keepin' it Real by Away Day participant's. The reasons for this being *'Not teachers 'making friends' and 'Fun'*.

Participants enjoyed all aspects – activities, group, facilitators. The main recommendation was 'more sessions' their comments have been included in the analysis below.

#### **Young Person Centered Approach**

*'I think they saw it as 'their' project'* (Learning Mentor). *'I usually find that pupils are only so enthusiastic when it involves getting out of lessons...they must have felt good about it'*. The Business Card Style laminated individual membership card gave *'a sense of importance'* (Co-facilitator) They felt special taking part in a course that could be developed for delivery in other schools - reflected in their eagerness to contribute to evaluation.

## **Keepin' it Real - Self-esteem and Young People - Pilot Project**

*'The project empowered pupils as they selected appropriate activities for each session'* (Kelvin Learning Mentor). Assumptions were not made as to which topics would be most important to young people – indeed drugs, which is arguably a main if not the main concern of adults was not a 'popular' topic with any of the courses. The facilitators developed a rapport to *'they opened up ... they took a lot of risks'* and their experience and skills enabled the activities to be adapted to particular interests and abilities of each group. The Final Session promoted/ensured a Celebratory Ending, including Presentation of Certificates, and refreshments as well as evaluation of achievements.

Valuing each and every individual and acknowledging the importance of not letting young people down, the Away Day took place despite of the low numbers.

### **Promotion and Self-selection**

*'Well the leaflet and the talks must have been appropriate and inspiring for the young women of year 8, because the sessions have all been full!'* (Learning Mentor) The 'up beat' and person centered approach of the promotion ensured more than sufficient numbers to run the courses at both schools. Two boys joined the second session of the course as a result of hearing about it from their friends. Likewise the autumn course at Kelvin benefited from the 'reputation' Keepin' it Real had gained from the two previous courses.

### **Self-selection**

The self-selection process was successful in attracting a variety of participants and in ensuring that Keepin' it Real was not seen as 'a losers club' *'I don't think any of the group are aware that Keepin' it Real was directed straight at self-esteem building, it is definitely not a club for losers'* (Kelvin Learning Mentor)

The Kelvin Learning Mentors encouraged particular individuals to participate, but ultimately it was the young person's choice to do so. Without stigma they then 'mixed' with others with differing levels of confidence, members of 'in crowds'. *'It is highly unlikely that they would have done this in any other non academic environment.'* (Learning Mentor)

Self-selection enabled Keepin' it Real to attract those who were not 'noticeably' lacking in self-esteem, yet all 'deserving to participate'. Participants came from different social backgrounds, family circumstances and cultures - including a teacher's daughter who plays in an orchestra and one who explained her mother *'goes nicking things'*. High academic achievers and one who 'twagged' one lesson after the Keepin' it Real session shared experiences and ideas. Keepin' it Real helped to break down barriers and encouraged social interaction

## **Keepin' it Real - Self-esteem and Young People - Pilot Project**

The Pilot Project identified a potential difficulty of self-selection – and also the means of resolving them. If the numbers for a course are too many to accommodate in one group self – selection goes into the ‘Second stage’ of participants choosing ‘first’ and ‘second groups’. If this is the case it is crucial that Keepin’ it Real is able to run two concurrent groups. This is to ensure that those young people who have ‘put themselves forward’ are not disappointed either by having to wait for several weeks or by being denied the opportunity to participate if the second group is not run, for whatever reason. This means ensuring the availability of facilitators and venue.

### **Group Work - Success of group interactive methods and peer learning**

*‘I honestly think that group work with peers is the only way to tackle self-esteem. However well meaning we as staff and adults are, it is actually the attitude of peers that makes the difference when it comes to feeling worthy or not’ (Learning Mentor)*

One of the greatest successes of Keepin’ it Real has been the use of group activities and peer learning and support. The 9/10 awarded to activities by the Kelvin Girls Spring is representative of all the evaluation. Participants were able to explore ‘personal problems’ ‘private things’ in ways which turned from them from feeling ‘odd’ or isolated to feeling ‘normal and included’ *‘I feel a lot better now my questions are answered. Now I’m proud of being a girl’ (Newland Girl)*

Case studies were extremely popular with Kelvin Girls Summer. They enjoyed discussing the implications of any actions and the ‘complexities’ of situations. The use of case studies helped start debate in a less intimidating or threatening way and helped then ‘lead onto’ personal experiences. Kelvin Girls Autumn particularly liked discussing ‘worries’ by writing and responding to ‘Problem Pages’ and pulling ‘statements’. Out of a hat’. Group discussion was also popular with Newland participants who also enjoyed role play *‘I like discussing the issues of life and what to do in these situations’ ‘Speaking with other people and finding out how to cope with friends problems and it helps when you’ve had a stressful day’*

The Kelvin Boys used more movement-based activities and short exercises to develop communication skills and peer support.

Group development encouraged peer learning and education *‘As the (Kelvin Boys) course progressed those sitting out were actively encouraged to join in, ‘to have a go’ ...They taught each other’ (Facilitators)*

This was equally important in Kelvin Girls Spring Course *‘All participated and respected each other. Members gave suggestions to others around problems they*

## **Keepin' it Real - Self-esteem and Young People - Pilot Project**

*discussed. It was clear that they all treated each other equally and respected each other. Showed care and compassion and were protective of each other.*  
(Facilitators)

Learning through enjoyment was crucial, particularly based in a school setting. All participant feedback highlights the fun element *'We have done fun things'* Kelvin Girls Autumn. The use of fun in learning is recognised by one Kelvin Girl Spring whose evaluation includes *'I think you should find more games that help us with something and fun at the same time!'*

The fun based group activities encouraged the making of friends and the development of social skills *'Met mates'* *'New Friends'*, both important to the longer term impact of the project.

### **External Facilitators**

Each session of each course was facilitated by two facilitators, a total of seven facilitators were used. Apart from the first two courses when a core team member was one of the facilitators for each, facilitators were used on a sessional basis. Facilitators had varying levels of experience of working with young people and were recruited contacts with organisations and agencies - Youth Service, West Hull Warren, Bransholme Women's Centre and Oasis/Taboo. All but one were female – at least one male being a prerequisite for the Kelvin Boys Course. The majority were aged under twenty-five.

All participant evaluation highlights the crucial role played by external facilitators in the success of Keepin' it Real. Only two of the Kelvin Girls Spring Course did not give the co facilitators 10/10 – giving 11/10! All participants wished to see more of the facilitators – *'Come back and see us when Kepin it Real is finished'* *'I hope Angie and Amanda do it next year'*. The Away Day participants wanted to know where 'their' facilitators were.

The rapport established by facilitators and participants was based on two key components – being 'non school staff' and the facilitators knowledge, skills and particularly their ability to 'relate to' young people.

Away Day evaluation included *'no teachers at all'* as one of the five key reasons why Keepin' it Real was 'Brill'. This Report has already shown that 'school' and 'teachers' are sources of stress for some participants. Although the relationship of pupils with Learning Mentors is different to that with teaching staff (arguably more personal and relaxed) facilitators at Kelvin mentioned that Learning Mentors were still perceived as 'part of the school setting': *'Even when Learning mentors came in the lads went quiet'*. They added that the facilitators were seen differently to Learning Mentors *'The girls referred to the Learning Mentors as 'Miss...and this is what they called us for the first few sessions.'*

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However, simply being non-teaching staff is not sufficient. Personal characteristics, knowledge and skills, enabled facilitators to develop an excellent rapport with participants. They described the facilitators as 'Cool' ... 'nice' ... 'fun...' and added they were 'so great and understanding'. Kelvin Learning Mentor stated that participants of all courses 'took to and related to facilitators. Really liked them. (They were). Sensitive and enthusiastic without being overbearing.... excellent...committed, really nice, related really well with the kids.'

### **Evaluation**

#### **Participants**

First of all, it must be stated that participants gave feedback willingly. They wanted to share their positive experiences of Keepin' it Real and to say thank you to the facilitators and the project. They also wanted to contribute to the chances of sustaining Keepin' it Real. They hoped their comments would help them to have a chance of doing Keepin' it Real again – as well as letting 'kids at other schools have a go'.

The Pilot Projects approach of giving responsibility to facilitators for the methods and quantity of participant evaluation resulted in differing levels and quantity of feedback. Future courses need to ensure that facilitators are committed to evaluation.

The Kelvin Year 7 Girls Spring Course provided the most comprehensive evaluation. Fourteen participants completed four separate evaluation forms. The visual JellyBean People Before and After, completed in the final session 'was a *'useful measurement tool'* (Facilitator). Three written forms creative in style (What do Ya Think, Webers Wonder Wheel and Suggestion Star)' were sent out during half term – all were returned during the first week of term. However, sending out a similar 'selection' of evaluation forms to the Kelvin Boys after the summer holidays received no response.

Kelvin Boys did not have any evaluation on the final session. Evaluating Keepin' it Real with participants during the final session ensures a certain amount of feedback. The Balloons used with Kelvin Girls Summer Course and the Four Questions used with Newland participants provided useful feedback. This contributes to feelings of achievement and to the celebratory nature of the end of the course.

It is clear that a selection of evaluation methods need to be used. The 'Jelly Bean' People whilst showing the 'shift' in feelings very clearly, did not provide information as to what and how this had come about and of what it comprised.

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Written questions complimented this. However, it is important not to 'over load' participants at the end of a creative, fun and group experience. Oral evaluation is useful – if it is recorded. The Away Day's creation of a 'Banner' to sum up Keepin' it Real encapsulated Keepin' it Real for participants in one word 'Hooray!'

### **Evaluation Facilitators and school staff.**

Evaluation Meetings were particularly useful to develop comments and ideas noted on individual evaluation forms. The need to improve the method of obtaining evaluation from Tutors was identified – suggestions being more detailed 'assessment forms' and meetings with tutors. However, it is important that Keepin' it Real is aware of ensuring that participants do not feel 'spied upon' and takes into account the time limitations of academic staff.

### **Key Finding 5 - Additional Benefits of the Keepin' it Real Pilot Project**

#### **Enhancing school based pastoral support: Learning Mentors at Kelvin Hall**

The involvement of the Learning Mentors in Keepin' it Real enabled them to obtain information and resources and develop knowledge and confidence to enhance the pastoral support they provide. They accessed New Hall Surgery's Teenage Health Clinic and Health Promotion Resource Library to collect leaflets and found the Book Box and exercises from the Facilitators Pack and other Resource Books useful. This has led to the development of the Drop ins – for example facilitating a group exercise to explore bullying and the establishment of 'Still Keepin' it Real' an after school club. Keepin' it Real also gave the Learning Mentors insight into personal and professional development opportunities – being interesting in participating in any future Kepin it Real Training and/or delivery of courses

#### **Inter-agency working/partnership**

'Working with other agencies' was a positive outcome of Keepin' it Real as evaluated by West Hull Warren and the Youth Service. Keepin' it Real would not have worked without the contribution of time, ideas, experiences and the facilitation of staff from the Warren and Youth Service, Learning Services. Others who contributed to the success of Keepin' it Real include Bransholme Women's Centre, Connexions and Kingston upon Hull City Council Children's Library and of course Kelvin Hall and Newland Schools.

Kelvin Learning Mentors highlighted the value of 'personal contacts' *'its good to bring outside agencies into school. It's ok trying to advise pupils to contact this place or that place, but they're much more likely to pick up a phone or walk to New Hall Surgery for example if they can put a face to a name.'*

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### **Information Sharing and Networking**

Interest in Keepin' it Real has been expressed by other schools and a wide range of organisations and agencies. Whilst the sharing of information has enabled a small selection of resource material (including reports and projects) to be collected at New Hall Surgery and useful contacts made, the networking has been restricted by the resources and time of the Pilot Project and the prioritisation to develop and deliver a programme for young people.

### **Inspiration for other projects**

#### **Research Project**

Keen to develop exploration of the issues raised during Keepin' it Real and the success of the approach and methods, WOREN, Wolds and East Riding Research Network (NHS) are developing a Research Project Proposal. Using the design of a magazine as the 'theme', the project will, it is hoped, be delivered at a school in Hull, an East Riding School and the Adventure Zone.

#### **International Project**

A partnership project between the Adventure Zone and International Peoples Project (Children's International Summer Villages) is being planned for the summer of 2004. This will bring young people from up to seven different countries to the Quadrant area of North Hull. They will work to develop local teenager's knowledge and skills in raising the confidence of younger members of their community.

## **Operational Considerations and Recommendations for the Development of Keepin' it Real**

Evaluation of our experiences of delivering four courses at two schools using seven facilitators from four organisations has been enabled us to produce recommendations for future development and delivery of Keepin' it Real. In order to ensure good practice based on consistent and quality partnership working and delivery, there is a need to establish procedures and operational guidelines, and to develop the mechanisms and resources for effective delivery.

### **Project Coordination and Management**

#### **Project Co-ordinator**

A permanent full time or part time salaried post of a Project Co-ordinator is a pre-requisite for any future development of Keepin' it Real. This will enable consistency and continuity of coordination and communication restricted by using a consultant on a part time basis. This post must be supported by appropriate resources.

The establishment of a Project Advisory Group will provide direction, management and accountability. The Autumn of 2002 has seen initial work to establish Keepin' it Real Project on as a Project of the newly established Friends of New hall Surgery Charitable Trust, with its own Advisory Group. This also widens the scope of funding opportunities.

#### **Working in Partnership with schools**

The Pilot Project has shown the importance of the working partnership between Project Co-ordinator, school staff and facilitators. Integral to this is a relationship based on communication, transparency, trust and confidence and a common understanding of the aims and approach of Keepin' it Real. It is crucial that all partners share a commitment to this during all stages of the Project – planning, delivery and evaluation. In order to do this the following are recommended

- **Partnership 'Contract' and Guide for school.**

This would clarify roles and responsibilities of schools and Project, including facilitators. It would include operational guidelines, relating to issues such as venue and the importance of confidentiality.

- **Named contact(s) within the school**

This person/these persons need to be easily 'accessible' with the flexibility and time to liaise between project, school and pupils. This is most likely to come from pastoral support staff. The working relationship developed with

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the Kelvin Hall Learning Mentors was integral to the success of Keepin' it Real. Their understanding, enthusiasm and commitment to the pastoral support of their pupils was matched by their knowledge of the school staff and procedures and organisational abilities. Teaching staff, despite commitment, do not have the time or flexibility

- **Involvement of other school staff**

This would increase the understanding of self-esteem and of the project, and enhance tutor feedback. It could take the form of staff liaison meetings, talks, and sessions.

- **Channels of Communication**

Methods of regular communication between school project co-ordinator and facilitators need to be firmly established at the beginning of the Project. Whilst maintaining the 'special relationship' and confidentiality between facilitators and participants, schools need a brief summary/overview of the Project and progression of the course for their own records and to respond to potential parental enquiry.

- **Administration Procedures**

To improve communication and to ensure health and safety, standardised procedures (for example registers, contact details) need to be developed.

### **Practical Considerations: Time and Venue**

Keepin' it Real offers self-contained courses (in contrast to 'ongoing' club or drop in based provision) School half terms restricted the courses to a maximum of five or six weeks, including promotion and self selection. This 'tight schedule' necessitates planning, organisation and initial publicity at the end of the preceding term, and a quick promotion and self-selection.

Accommodating Keepin' it Real sessions within school hours also raises issues. Evaluation from participants and facilitators of all courses was that more time is needed. At Kelvin it was felt that the lunch hour did not give a full hour once lunches had been eaten and the venue cleared for the start of afternoon lessons Participants of the Newland Course which took place for three 1½ hours afterschool wanted more sessions, rather than longer sessions.

However, the Kelvin lunchtime courses had a far better attendance and retention rate. The four courses at Kelvin had an average of 14 participants (87% of those who signed up) for the five sessions. The twelve Newland participants dwindled to three over the three sessions. Facilitators stated that *'parents wanted them to do things after school'*

## **Keepin' it Real - Self-esteem and Young People - Pilot Project**

The atmosphere is an integral part of Keepin' it Real, and as a result the venue needs to be comfortable and able to accommodate group activities. It must be available for all sessions and completely confidential, out of bounds 'to non-participants', both pupils and staff. The Kelvin Hall Drama was ideal, furniture did not have to be moved and *'The lads took ownership of it arriving early to close the curtains to the outside world'*. (Facilitator)

### **Future delivery of the Keepin' it Real Programme**

#### **Facilitators Pool**

The Pilot Project has identified the need to develop a Keepin' it Real pool of facilitators, who are able to work on a sessional basis. This is to ensure the availability of a selection of facilitators who are committed to the Project and who have the necessary skills and experiences to delivery courses in a school – or other – setting. Structures, procedures and resources need to be integrated – including training, support and supervision by the Project Co-ordinator and the development of the Facilitators Pack to assist facilitators.

#### **Keepin' it Real Facilitators Pack**

The Facilitators Pack was evaluated in view of its future use, particularly by those not involved in the design and delivery of the Pilot Project. It was praised by both more and less experienced facilitators as being

*'Excellent...Easy to use....Friendly...Good introductions....Very useful resource'*.

*'Easy to read when you are busy...better than having to read whole books'*

commented the less experienced facilitators about the 'self-esteem and young people' section. They felt it developed their understanding and as a result increased their confidence in facilitating the sessions. Additional information relating to self-esteem and the particular topics (started by the Project Co-ordinator) was agreed as useful.

Facilitators found the Tool Box of activities and exercises *'easy to use'* for several reasons. The topic based nature helped to respond to the particular needs/interest of the participants, the loose-leaf pages also assisted in planning sessions. Some facilitators complemented the Tool Box with their 'own' activities. The Kelvin Boys course identified the need to include more *'male orientated'* activities and more *'movement based'* exercises. Future development of Keepin' it Real must include these recommendations.

### **Supporting Resources**

#### **Book Box**

The Facilitators of the Kelvin Girls Spring Course. Found that they did not have time to promote and administer the Book Box within the hour-long lunch break. Only one participant made use of it – taking out a Cassette of novels by very popular Teenage Author Jacqueline Wilson. As a result it was not used for other courses. However, facilitators and Learning Mentors agreed on the 'variety' of 'appropriate' books and recommended that the practicalities of the Book Box being administered by Learning Mentors (or the 'school contact') be considered for future Courses

#### **Information Leaflet**

The production of the leaflet identified two issues about services provided for young people. The majority are targeted at those over 14 years of age and the difficulty in contacting a number of organisations and agencies. Information leaflets must be updated for each and every course to ensure accuracy of information and the ease by which they can be reached.

Kelvin Hall participants received an individual Wallet Envelope of health based information collated by the Learning Mentors. This included leaflets from Health Promotion leaflets and Handouts they had produced about, for example, bullying and self-identity. Facilitators from the Kelvin Autumn Course used a selection of Sexual Health Leaflets. For future courses, Keepin' it Real needs to consider standardising the complementary material – perhaps linking in with the school nurse and/or other organisations.

### **Keepin' it Real December 2002.**

The success of the Pilot Project has led to demand to develop Keepin' it Real into a sustainable, citywide initiative. A funding bid was made to Hull Children's Fund to deliver four more Keepin' it Real courses. We had the enthusiastic support of Sir Henry Cooper, Endeavour High School and Kingswood High School as well as a voluntary sector young people's organisation the Adventure Zone. Unfortunately this was unsuccessful. New Hall Surgery is fully committed to the continuation and consolidation of Keepin' it Real. To enhance the management, accountability and funding opportunities the process of integrating Keepin' it Real into the newly established Friends of New Hall Surgery Charitable Trust, as a separate project with an Advisory Group has started. However, further funding is required if the potential of this exciting initiative is to be fulfilled.

### **Recommendations**

- Secure funding for a permanent salaried post of Project Co-ordinator, resources and facilitators.

## **Keepin' it Real - Self-esteem and Young People - Pilot Project**

- Develop Keepin' it Real as a Project of Friends of New Hall Surgery with an Advisory Group.
- Develop the operational procedures of working with host partners.
- Develop the delivery methods, in particular a Facilitators Pool and the Facilitators Pack.
- Develop working relationships with and deliver courses in more schools and community and voluntary groups.
- Develop networking with schools, voluntary and community organisations and agencies working with young people.
- Link into relevant health and young people strategies such as Health Promoting Schools and Mental Health Promotion Strategy.

### **Bibliography / Useful Resources**

Adams, J, (1997) **Girl Power, How Far does it Go?**, Sheffield Centre for HIV and Sexual Health, 1997

Lenderyou, G and Ray, C, Ed, (1997) **Lets Hear it for the Boys!** Sex Education Forum, National Children's Bureau, m London

White, M (1996), **self-esteem It's Meaning and Value in Schools**, Folens Limited, Cambridge

Plummer, D (1999), **Helping Children to Build self-esteem**, A Photocopiable Activities Book, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London

Moore, C and Rae, T (2000), **Positive People A self-esteem Building Course**, Lucky Dip Publishing, Bristol

Girl Guide/The Body Shop (1997), **Girls Get Real!** self-esteem Activity Pack, London

Lofas, P (2001), **Act Up, Speak Out**, Hull and East Riding Community Health, NHS Trust

**Wise Guide Series**, a positive guide to improving self-esteem for teenage girls. Titles include Self-esteem, Bullying, Divorce and Separation, Drugs, Periods, Sex and Your Rights, Hodder.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1

#### **Newland School for girls: 'Bodies' Exercise with full Year 7 Group Promotion Session April 2002**

Twenty-five groups produced a total of 25 'Bodies' - Stress 8; Appearance 5; Friends 4; Family 3; Miscellaneous 5 the bodies varied in style and content but some common issues can be seen. Photographs of seven bodies are included as appendices 2 - 8.

#### **Stress**

This was the most popular topic. Several bodies included comments/phrases/lists of all the things that caused stress, others concentrated on one or two key aspects.

- **School** – teachers, subjects (lots different ones), dinner ladies
- **Appearance/body** – particularly hair, spots, periods, smelly feet, plastic surgery.... Liposuction
- **Family** – members, relationships, arguments, parents thinking they know best

Types of people/How they are treated included interfering people, those that 'go on and on', idiots, being blamed for what not done, being called a lesbian when you are not, people who lie, who are noisy, boyfriends, bullying.

One particularly visual body gave a very clear message as to the stress relating to sex. Indeed sex as stressful and threatening was part of a lot of the bodies – 'creeping into' generally more positive bodies about family. Pictures from magazines were used to illustrate this.

However it is clear from the stress bodies (as well as the others) that the 160 Year 7 pupils at Newland feel a great deal of stress relating to many/varied aspects of their lives.

Other bodies indicated aspects of their lives which caused stress, including '*having (stressful) babies*'. They also indicated awareness of stress induced behaviors, '*(stress) drinking problems.... 'Swearing through stress.' 'Putting on weight through stress.'*

### **Appearance**

The Appearance/Image bodies highlighted the importance of 'looking right' felt by young people and the pressures on them to do so. Several groups made use of pictures and headlines from magazines. One contrasted a picture of a 'slim woman' and a scone 'fatty foods' (their words). The aspects of looking good were make up, looks, and hair, teeth and eyes. Money and mobile phones featured, as did the many cuttings of brand names. Their connection between 'looking good and feeling good' was mentioned in several times. Some bodies did extend this definition to include 'friendship, love, playful and marriage', as well as 'ugly friends'.

Worthy of note from one of the Stress Bodies is that 11 and 12 year old girls are aware have and feel stressed by cosmetic surgery.

### **Friends**

'Girls at our age need friends' 'You need friends at a time like this' 'Friends are special'. These comments summarise the importance of friends which was expressed in the four bodies. Hands were included on several of the bodies Friends as caring and loving, as being there when you need them, friend for smiling, laughter and fun, friends as giving support, 'friends make you feel safe'. 'Friends are there for you when you are in danger'. There was also awareness of the 'two way' nature of friendship 'Friends need each other' 'You need them as much as they need you' One body included some of the difficulties of friendship 'Friends come and go' 'Sometimes its hard to stay loyal' 'Friends can be cruel but they can be nice'. There was also mention of the 'right' friends 'Never mix with the wrong crowd'.

### **Family**

Overall, the bodies relating to family were very positive. These comments summarise 'Family is what matters...Families are caring.... It's all about love 'Families are priceless...Family is better than any CD or game. Love your family and they love you back'. Indeed words caring and love prominent/many times.

There were mentions of 'annoying siblings' and disagreements and embarrassments but in general feeling of family as positive forever and two ways.

However, amongst these positive statements there was a comment/one young person had written '

*'I haven't seen my mum for two years. My mum is missing live with my dad and big brother'*

*(This highlights the need for the Project to be aware of individuals within a group setting and not to over generalise)*

## **Keepin' it Real - Self-esteem and Young People - Pilot Project**

### **Miscellaneous**

Several groups took the opportunity to choose their own theme. One 'Our Poster is about nice things and bad things' provided a good summary/overview of the co-existing positives and negatives. It was subtitled 'What a girl needs'. Do you need to rethink your image? It included bad hair days, boyfriends, facial treatment, and underage sex, (stress) drinking problems.... Swearing through stress.... Having (stressful babies ...watching T.V...miserable.... putting on weight through stress' miserable and make up.

Another body included flowers and hearts and words 'Girl Power', 'mummy', puppy love and a picture One Body included hands and a picture of a young male character from Eastenders (Soap). Indeed several bodies included pop stars

Unfortunately, 2 bodies stuck together, preventing identification of themes