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BHI

(B)HI (Black Health Initiative) is a Community Engagement Organisation in Leeds working within communities for equal access to Education, Health and Social Care provision.

Within the last four years, BHI has developed bespoke programmes to ensure that the profile of health and wellbeing issues that disproportionately affect visible minority communities in Leeds are being raised working in partnership with a number of innovative partners that share the same or similar aims.

BHI’s Teenage Health and Wellbeing Programme

Through one to one or group work, in a school, community setting or BHI offices (dependant on the needs of the young person), BHI’s Teenage Health and Wellbeing Programme aims to promote positive emotional health and wellbeing, raise self-esteem and reduce risk-taking behaviour in marginalised and disadvantaged young people aged 13-25 years. All of BHI’s youth projects aim to:

- INFORM young people about their health
- ENCOURAGE positive lifestyle choices
- INSPIRE to make positive decisions
- EMPOWER to be healthy in mind, body and soul
- SUPPORT health and wellbeing within the home.
National Perspective on Young people and mental health

Rates of mental health problems reported among children and young people have risen over the last fifty years1 (Audit Commission, 1999). Among teenagers, rates of anxiety and depression increased by 70% in the past 25 years (Mental Health Foundation, 2005) and the incidence of reported self-harm has also risen, with one in 15 young people now thought to be affected3. 8.94% of mental health patients are Black, compared with 3.32% of people in England and Wales. 4.52% of mental health patients are Asian, compared to 6.82% of people in England and Wales. ‘Black’ refers to people from Black Caribbean, Black African, and Black Other backgrounds. ‘Asian’ refers to people from Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Asian Other backgrounds (Care Quality Commission, Count Me In 2010 and Office for National Statistics Census 2011).

Left unresolved, mental health problems significantly affect children and young people’s social and educational development. This can have a profound and lasting negative impact into adult life in terms of employment, relationships, and likelihood of disability. Paradoxically, the time at which most help is often needed – the period of transition from childhood into adulthood – is exactly the time at which services are currently least able to meet that need.

Recent Government policy, spearheaded by Every Child Matters (H. M. Treasury, 2003), has placed increased focus on children’s wellbeing and promoting mental health, with emphasis on early intervention and identification. Local Children and Young People’s Plans have been introduced to provide support for more integrated and effective services. Strengthening health promotion in local communities and targeting resources to the neediest communities have been highlighted as priorities. Youth Matters (Department for Educational and Schools, 2006), the Government’s strategy for youth published in March 2006 intends to build on this by empowering young people in shaping the services they need, encouraging their involvement and supporting better choices.
Conference Aim

Young people from a BME background are increasingly attaining strong GCSE results and going on to study in higher education institutes. Particularly those who are third and fourth generation migrants are very much assimilated into the UK and are in many cases outperforming their White counterparts. When taking this into consideration, BHI are aware that the time at which most help is often needed - the period of transition from childhood into adulthood – is exactly the time at which services are currently least able to meet that need.

Many initiatives often focused on young people that are disengaged or underachieving therefore, by default, those excelling are often ignored or left with little support. The aim of this conference was to initiate dialogue within Leeds amongst students from marginalised and disadvantaged backgrounds who are showing a level of high achievement in all/any areas of their education. Parents, educators and youth workers are invited to engage with young people on their views and opinions on issues/topics chosen by young people. This conference will assess the possible factors affecting mental health that in turn may affect their attainment and choice.

Conference Rationale

This conference, being the first of its kind in Leeds, was an open assembly to young people, parents, practitioners and educators who reside across the region. 78 delegates (30 Young people and 48 Adults) from diverse communities and organisations citywide attended this event with over 20 apologies from local schools and colleges.

The conference sought to bring together a number of diverse young people, health agencies, charity organisations, businesses and the NHS to openly discuss ways forward to support this students in regards to issues surrounding their mental health and well-being.

BHI aimed to inspire and empower young people or those working with young people to openly discuss issues and concerns and for policy makers to improve access to services and support agencies.
Methodology

#SELFIE conference was conceived, developed and facilitated by a team of 4 BHI Youth Ambassadors® alongside BHI’s Teenage Health and Wellbeing Coordinator. The team met on a bi-weekly basis over 3 months to plan, promote and prepare resources such as promotional materials, media to be showcased and evaluation tools.

* BHI Youth Ambassadors - a leadership programme in which young people aged 16-25 are given the opportunity to develop and deliver their own projects in their community whilst building their confidence and transferable employability skills.

Outreach

- Email and postal distribution to schools and colleges across West Yorkshire.
- Targeted flyer distribution throughout local and national organisations and businesses with a vested interest in supporting young people from marginalised and disadvantaged communities.
- Community Radio advertisements
- Social media outlets e.g. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn
- Announcements at various other BHI events and activities.

Venue

#SELFIE Mental Health and Wellbeing Youth Conference was held at Broadcasting Place, Leeds Beckett University. The choice of a central location was based on the ease of accessibility, the provision of a safe environment for all attendees and also in partnership with Leeds Beckett University in their quest to harness academic students with their facilities.

Stalls

The event included a Market Place that included a variety of 23 local, regional and national organisations providing an array of information around health issues, youth services and relevant services pertinent to young people.

These organisations included: [See Page 6]
• Aspire
• Barnardo’s Futures
• BHI
• Child Friendly Leeds
• Commissioner – West Yorkshire
• Community Links
• East North East Area Support Team
• Genesis – Isis
• Groundwork Trust
• Improving Access to Psychological
• Leeds Apprenticeship Hub
• Leeds Church Institute
• Leeds City Museum
• Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust
• Leeds Involving People
• Office of the Police & Crime
• PATH Yorkshire
• People In Action (Leeds) UK
• Therapies
• Together Women Project
• Volition
• Young Minds
• Youthwatch

**Evaluation/Monitoring**

BHI Youth Ambassadors created evaluation forms to collect feedback on their work. Conference delegates were asked to complete an evaluation form at the end of each workshop and also at closing of the conference. Unfortunately, we only received 27 returned forms that may affect the results that follow:
We want to hear what you think!

Thank you for participating at today’s event. Please take a moment to answer the questions below. We greatly appreciate your feedback. This survey will be used to improve future programs.

1. The objectives of the event were clearly defined
2. The content was organised and easy to follow
3. The materials distributed\* were helpful?
4. The time allocated for training was sufficient?

\*Materials distributed:
- Conference Programme
- Pen portraits of Guest Speakers and BHI Teenage Health & Wellbeing Coordinator
- Information about BHI and Free Counselling Service
- BHI KuSikia Counselling Self-Referral form
- Wrist bands branded “BHI #S.E.L.F.I.E – Self Esteem Lies Firm In Everyone”
- BHI Stress balls
- Leeds Beckett branded pens, note pads and mouse mats.
[Randomly selected participant comments]

6. **What aspect of the conference did you like most?**

   “Hearing Crystal’s experience - phenomenal! Brilliant, inspiring speaker!”
   “Everything!”
   “Listening to people’s stories the speakers”
   “The workshops”
   “The young people’s voices - videos and inspirational speakers”

7. **What could be done to improve (next time)?**

   “More time for workshops”
   “More young people”
   “Speak more about the effects on physical harm or suicide etc.”
   “Nothing perfect!!!”

8. **What ideas/suggestions do you have for future events?**

   “Aimed at disaffected young people and professionals”
   “Options to ask panel questions, one to one.”
   “Personal one-to-one shared stories with each table”

9. **What was the key value/benefit to you by attending this event?**

   “Finding out about BHI and other services in Leeds”
   “Putting restorative practice into action. Great connections with youth ambassadors and groups to make sure their views are heard”
   “Connectedness uplifting and inspiring”
   “Learning more about BHI and some facts on mental health I know more about mental health”
   “Helped me with ideas or things and very understanding”
   “Controlling stress”
   “Thinking positively”
   “Empowerment”
   “I feel that I can control my stress a lot more and I can go to more people now.”
   “Motivated”

10. **Should this event be repeated in the future?** Yes from all responses.
**Programme**

Wednesday 10th September 2014, 12pm – 4pm  
Broadcasting Place, Leeds Metropolitan University

12:00 Registration & Lunch

13:00 Welcome & Introductions – Heather Nelson  
Director of BHI

13:10 Special Guest Speaker – Ranjit Uppal  
Deputy District Judge

First non-white and youngest former Huddersfield Law Society President to be elected in its 138 years of existence which is inspiring and motivational for young people who often feel marginalised and disadvantaged.

13:20 Workshop

14:05 BREAK

14:15 Workshop

15:00 Special Guest Speaker – Crystal Ward  
BHI Youth Ambassador

An articulate, and confident young lady, aged 20, shares her personal experience of success and its effects on her mental well-being.

15:10 Special Guest Speaker – Dr. Delroy Hall  
Counsellor and Educator

Inspirational speaker shares his unique, thought provoking story of challenging stereotypes and achieving the seemingly impossible.

15:20 Open Discussion

15:50 Performance by Tila and Tavelah as featured on BBC The Voice.

16:00 Close – Opportunity to Network

** Conference programme facilitated by Saphra Bennett

#S.E.L.F.I.E – Self Esteem Lies Firm In Everyone (BHI, 2014)
Keynote Speakers

“What I’ve enjoyed most has been learning how the members of the panel have overcome issues in life to be successful”

(Young Person Delegate)

Ranjit Uppal
Deputy District Judge and Former Huddersfield Law Society President

Ranjit Uppal is a Solicitor Advocate and Partner at Switalskis Solicitors, one of the largest regional law firms in Yorkshire.

Ranjit shared words of wisdom of coping with life stressors and major life events whilst pursuing a successful professional career with reference to his own personal experience of coping with the bereavement of his father whilst beginning his law degree. He encourages young people to always “think bigger.”

Crystal Ward
BHI Youth Ambassador

Crystal, an undergraduate studying Abuse and Criminology, with a personal experience of the welfare system, delivered a moving and motivational speech to delegates. She discussed her past of the damaging labels, stereotypes and low expectations she was privy to as a Looked After Child such as “LAC” and “Health Risk”.

Crystal gave mention to the support systems she has had in place such as her foster mother, good friends and organisations such as BHI.
Bishop Dr. Delroy Hall
Counsellor and Educator

Delroy gave delegates an inspiring and uplifting insight into his past of leaving school with very few qualifications and coping with the struggles of growing up in the 70s as a young black male.

Dr Hall discussed the importance of having an outlet for emotion and talked of his own methods such as sport and writing as a means to “blow off steam.”

Ann Simon**
Psychotherapist

Although Ann was not a keynote speaker, she offered her valuable professional knowledge of young people and mental health into the panel discussion. She also gave sound advice to delegates on the physiological and psychological effects and importance of sleep on our mental wellbeing.

In 2007 Ann became one of the first school counsellors in West Yorkshire centring on the needs of young people, experiencing a wide range of emotional/psychological and psychiatric problems.
Performers

Saph Houlden

The conference was opened by an emotive, inspirational and thought-provoking short film, directed by Leeds organisation, Studio12, explaining how grief impacted on Saph as a teenager.

“I wanted to make other people understand that you’re not alone. You may have to go out of your own way to find someone to talk to but it will be the best decision you’ll probably ever make.”

Tila and Tavelah Robinson

BHI Youth Ambassadors Tila and Tavelah, as featured on BBC The Voice 2014 closed the conference with an upbeat video link to encourage other young people to never give up. Despite not winning The Voice, the girls are still concentrating on their Psychology degrees at Birmingham University whilst pursuing their musical careers.

“Just a little something we like to tell ourselves and others - Tough people don’t last, tough people do!”
Workshops

Workshop topics (Stress management, Healthy Relationships, Effects of Social Media and Mental Health) were chosen by BHI Youth Ambassadors as the main areas of concern regarding their mental health and wellbeing. Part-way through the conference, delegates were invited to take part in two 25 minute workshops in groups of 5-8. These workshops were as follows:

Let’s Talk Mental Health
Delivered by Young Minds
An open discussion on all things mental health to understand the term and explore the facts and fiction about Mental Health.

“I got some helpful tips and learned more about issues affecting young people.”

Keep Calm and Carry On
Delivered by YoungMinds
This workshop explored practical ways in which young people can be assisted in managing themselves with ever greater success.

Developing the ability to manage situations that may generate feelings of stress is an essential prerequisite of healthy emotional development. Without this ability, it is all but impossible to engage in learning in an open and effective manner.

“It was useful to get people to think about how they get stress and some strategies for managing it”

You Are What You Share
Delivered by Ben Fraser (BHI Youth Ambassador)
As the first generation of teenagers growing up with social media as an integral part of their life. It is important to understand and share how the difference in the way young people interact with peers, parents and how they use technology may or may not affect their mental wellbeing. Discussions around cyberbullying, self-image, depression and isolation.

“I liked that it was delivered by young people- they did really well”
Love is Respect
Delivered by Dr. Delroy Hall
This workshop aimed:
• To identify and explore what makes a healthy relationship.
• To explore the benefits of communication.
• To discover how healthy relationships make you feel. Consequently improving confidence and self-esteem within young people.

“The workshop was really interesting and gave valuable tips and advice on wellbeing - wished it was longer!”

Restorative practice (Adults Only)
Delivered by Sean Kalchmarski (Leeds City Council)
All adults including stall holders took part in this workshop that explored the fundamentals of Restorative Practice.

Leeds is aiming to use Restorative Practices as the basis for the way a whole range of agencies approach their work, from schools, PRUs and youth offending teams through to the police and the probation service. Therefore it is imperative that parents, teachers and all those in contact with young people are aware of the methodology that is being used, in order to understand the behaviours of young people. This may also support and maintain a healthy and positive relationship in all arenas of a child’s life to avoid possible negative mental health if there is for example conflict between behavioural management at school and in the home.
Emerging Needs

“Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.”

Albert Einstein

- Diverse, innovative and appropriate means and services need to be developed to support young people from marginalised and disadvantaged backgrounds to best suit their individual and/or cultural needs, recognising that a one-size-fits-all approach is ineffective.

- More should be done to enable primary care to recognise the early signs of mental health distress and to work with others in the system to support individuals to maintain their health.

- Discrimination and negative perceptions about mental illness need to be addressed across the whole community, including people from Black and minority ethnic communities.

- More work needs to done to help the community at large understand mental health issues. This includes schools and religious groups. These organisations have a significant impact on people’s lives through their positions in the community.

- Better promotion and signposting of the services that already exist.

- Social support and services required in addition to health advice.

- Clear and effective referral pathways to be developed to all service providers.

- Prominent, positive and influential role models from visible minorities within services to become mentors, sharing experience, coping mechanisms and evidencing a “can do” approach.

- Safe spaces for young people, parents/carers and educators to initiate dialogue about their health and well-being.
Recommendations

- Schools and the community can play an important role in reaching youth and determining their level of mental health. Effective mental health promotion in educational and community settings in turn strengthens the core objectives of education and the youth sector.

- Sign posting needs to be appropriate to needs of the individuals in all aspects of social, practical and cultural means.

- Awareness campaigns and earlier education for children and young people to address stigma and cultural myths surrounding mental health.

- Services should be appropriate to the communities they serve whilst ensuring they are inclusive and equal to all.

- Commissioning bodies such as Public Health and CCGs should consider funding community based organisations who work towards challenging cultural myths and taboos which can lead to perceived barriers when engaging with mainstream providers.
NEXT STEPS

• To link the voice of young individuals from marginalised and disadvantaged communities to the health care ‘system’. Influencing policy change and targeted inclusivity to ensure equality of service, from a grassroots perspective. This includes BHI Youth Ambassadors initiating a Young Leaders for Leeds, in which these young people will advise and influence decision makers regarding young BME people in Leeds. This opportunity will also support these young people’s progression into becoming Leaders for Leeds.

• Include those marginalised and disadvantaged young people excelling in the education and attainment in the challenge for Leeds to become a ‘Child Friendly City’ by working with a three strand cord approach that incorporates parents, educators and young people themselves.

• To encourage young people to make their mental health a priority; influence lifestyle choices and support behavioural changes. For example by:
  o Visiting a mental health care professional to receive counselling and support services
  o Increasing ‘mental health’ awareness.
  o Raise awareness of main mental health issues which disproportionately affect sections of the community
  o Actively seeking support groups and relevant services
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