Learning to work with children with a Learning Disability by experience

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And

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Background

• Teaching on ‘Working with children with Learning Disabilities’ request
• Can only do this, by doing with children with Learning Disabilities!
• Why important?
  • Values of inclusion, voice, flexibility and innovation
  • Social role valorisation (Wolfensberger, 1985, 1998, 2000); creating valued social roles and normalising experiences, expectations and aspirations of people at risk of being devalued
  • Highlighting and shifting disabling discourses and practices
  • Hard for YP to challenge negative messages about disability. More likely to be influenced than influence the behaviours and beliefs of adults around them (Reeve, 2013)
  • YP with Learning Disabilities unlikely to be asked to contribute directly to discussions about care (CBF, and Mencap, 2017)
• Working towards a truly inclusive communities: Visibility, Education, Celebration
Background

- Established YP participation groups in special schools in collaboration with SSCLD and Barnardos
- 2 groups joined teaching session over last 3 years at University campus for approx. 1.5 hours
- Prepare in participation sessions prior
  - photos of trainees
  - plan what to say and do
- BIG thanks
  - Young People from ‘Remarkable Ravens’ and ‘Youth are Incredible’
  - Schools and staff
  - Participation group facilitators
    - Dr Jeni McElwee
    - Karen Dunthorne and Lois Connelly
    - Mike Lewis (Barnardos)
What we did

• Trainees introduce themselves and 1 thing they like doing
• YP present themselves and what they want trainees to know about them
• YP present ideas about school and what makes a good therapist
• Break into groups for activities / games to get to know each other
• Hear from each group about what they did
• Trainees offer feedback and reflections to YP
• YP have tour of University
• Everyone has lunch together
Examples of how young people decided to present themselves
All about me

Name (Photo)

Things that I like:
• Singing with my mother
• I LOVE my mother for ever
• I love my family and drawing
• Spending time with friends and family
• Wolves, tigers, snakes, birds of prey

Things that I don’t like:
• Chocolate
• Dancing (maybe)
• Cake
• Anything sweet
• Lasagne
• Curry
• Tests (mock exams)

How others describe me:
• Has lots of ideas
• A good artist
• Helping out others
• Funny
• Confident young lady
• Friends with Mike at Barnardo’s
• Always prepared

About my school:
• Learning things with my friends
• Helping my friends
• Teacher Nick
• TA Gemma
• LSA Elaine
All about me

Name (Photo)

I like:
• Helping
• Chocolate
• Sleeping
• WWE wrestling

What I don't like:
• Computers
• P.E.
• Arguing with my sister

How others describe me:
• Cheeky
• Funny
• Happy
• Smiley

About my school:
• Teacher Nick
• LSA Gemma, Elaine
• We have fun
• Help each other
• Work
Likes and dislikes

- Eastenders
- Cinema
- Clown
- Being told off
- Being sick
- Dog bark
- I like
- I don't like
Who we are:
What we like

- drawing
- jokes
- singing
- football
- Duran Duran
- Elvis
- my mother
- David Bowie

When people say nice things and help me out and doing my work
Who we are: How would other people describe you?

He has a good sense of humour and good at chatting!

People say that I am funny and cool

She is funny and cool

People say that I am helpful and kind

She is understanding

People say that I am skinny

People say that I am pretty

People say that I am happy

Fine in school but angry at home with my parents

People say that I am embarrassing

He has a good sense of humour and good at chatting!
Who we are: what we don’t like

Moving my stuff

People telling me what to do

Being bossed about by other kids

Bossy people or bossy friends
Examples of how young people presented their views on school and help / services
School is a good school. They understand people that are different.

You call teachers by their first names.

Don't have to wear uniform in college.

I don't get bullied as much.

I like the staff – they are helpful.

Welcoming

Teachers are understanding

School that helps disabled kids

Sometimes difficult to talk to staff because I am shy or find it hard to talk to teacher.

Go on trips
- Happy
- Listen
- Cool
- Friendly
- Signing
- Speak English
- Cheerful
- Quiet
- Japanese
- Jamaican
- Easy to understand
- Excitable
- Smiley
- Funny
What a therapist should be like

Need to find out if anything bad has happened to me

Help people

Helpful, friendly, kind, good listener, they should be able to talk and listen

Should not ask me about personal things

Caring

Play games

Chatty
What a therapist should be like

Female

 Interested

 Male

 Need to know what I like to join in with me

 Don’t look away when you are talking

 Ask how I’ve been getting on

 What your favourite things are

 What my family is like
Trainees experience

Dr Cathy Randle-Phillips
Clinical Tutor/Lecturer, University of Bath Doctorate in Clinical Psychology

Former Bath University Doctorate in Clinical Psychology trainees (now Clinical Psychologists):

Dr Rosalind Cooper
Dr Hannah Shilling
Dr Kristina Bennert
Dr Charlotte Whittle

And

Current Bath Doctorate trainee Clinical Psychologists:

Faith Brammer
Nicola Birdsey
Trainee Feedback
Trainee Feedback

‘It was just helpful to just spend time getting to know them with no pressure to do therapy, but get to know them and get some experience around a range of therapy’

‘It was great hearing what young people wanted from workers, to have a chance to engage with young people without pressures of ‘therapy’ or an ‘agenda’ ‘
Trainee Feedback

‘It was fantastic to have service users involved in this session, was great to be able to spend time with them and also see how staff who knew them well communicate with them’

‘I really valued the knowledge and honesty of the young people’
Trainee Feedback

‘Meeting the children was a lovely opportunity to interact – I was able to pick up a few ideas about communication difficulties, breaking the ice, etc. within this short space of time’

‘The participation group were brilliant’
Trainee Feedback

‘Having the children join us and share their experiences was definitely the highlight, and I learnt so much from them’.

‘The young people did a great job, and were really impressive and brave talking to us’
Trainee Feedback

‘I really enjoyed this lecture and it made me think about a possible elective within child LD which I hadn’t considered before. I found the involvement of children with a learning disability was really helpful and really enjoyable’.
References

