

Kidz Tlk Plymouth – What we thought

Why did we put on a conference?

The Children's Fund-Plymouth Partnership was asked to develop the conference by Plymouth City Council Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership. The city provided both funding and support for the event. Kidz Tlk Plymouth came about as a result of the Big Event held last year, and we wanted to give children and young people an insight into what services are currently available. Children's Fund believe it is important that children have an opinion on what services they would like to see in the future. Various consultations were planned for both days and the results will be used to inform plans for future children's services in Plymouth.

How did it happen?

A series of planning meetings were held at TR2 hosted by Children's Fund-Plymouth Partnership. It was decided to make the day a mix of educational and fun activities from break dance to help for young people experiencing family breakdown. As well as a series of workshops, a display of activities and services for young people in Plymouth would be held in the hall. The conference took place at the Sound House on 22 and 23 November with two sessions held on each day to enable as many pupils as possible to attend.

What did young people do?

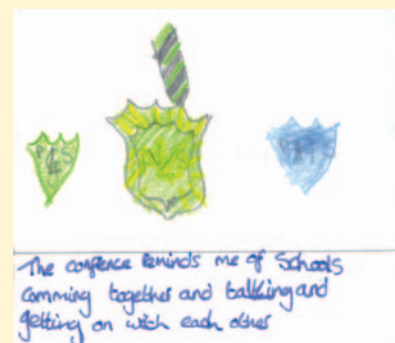
Young people from Stoke Damerel Community College played a central role in all planning meetings starting in June 2006. We met with Participation Workers to decide on the name and logo and how to involve the pupils from all schools in Plymouth. They decided to invite all the school councils, as they would include pupils from all year groups. They wrote the letter to the school councils. We also went to the planning meetings with lots of people. Although it was quite scary at first we realised that adults do listen. "We thought it was a really big privilege to be able to have our opinions and points said at all the planning meetings. I would love to be able to do another conference which helps people and get them to know more about something.

We wrote a speech at the end of the day thanking everyone for their help. It helped me overcome my fear of public speaking. If there was another conference I would love to be involved especially with the same great people.

"I thought the conference was an excellent two days and exactly what we wanted it to be if not better. Personally I found out about a lot of services available to me that I never knew existed. "

Who Came?

Invitations were sent to all schools in Plymouth. 15 primary and 6 Secondary and two special schools were represented, together with young people attending from Hamoaze House who were not in education. Young people from Pembroke Street Youth Club also came.

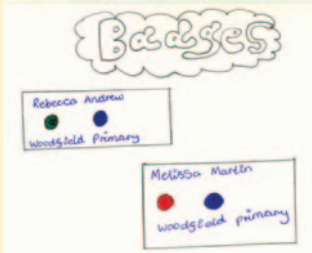


The Event - our Views

The Venue was chosen with the help of the young people on the planning committee and they made a visit before approving it.

"I loved the venue as it was really big and a good place for children to go as it doesn't have a "schooly" atmosphere.

Arrivals



When we arrived we were given name badges, which had coloured stickers to represent the workshops we had chosen. The young helpers had t-shirts with colours to match the workshops, which were good to let you know who to go to. I liked the entrance. It was fun. It was sort of welcoming.

Display area

In the main hall the decorations were good; it had a festival feel about it. There was a lot of information. It was nice to see what things are going on in Plymouth.



It was a rare event.

The people on the stalls should be more outgoing and talk to the young people instead of us having to approach them, or possibly have some young people as helpers. Some children thought they would be nervous of talking to anyone new, even if it was a young person.

It would help if the stalls could have interactive displays, more visual or in different colours as there was a lot of written information.
The boat really drew people who were interested in this. It was full of information.



"The best part of the day was looking round the stalls."



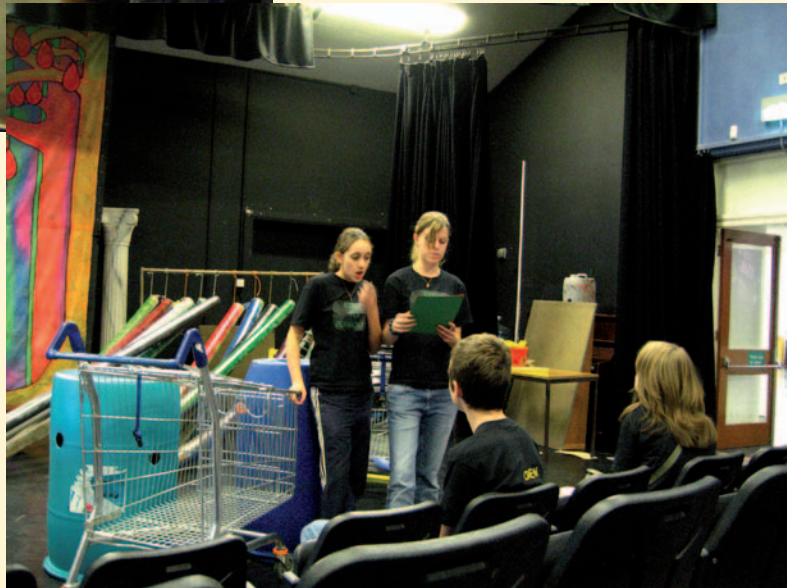
Young people as guides

The young people were wearing t-shirts with the same colour as the workshops so they could easily see who needed to go to each workshop, and the children knew who to ask. It was felt that rules should be set for pupils helping. One young person missed a workshop, but was directed to another one.

"I enjoyed helping and made lots of new friends".

Young people helping in workshops

I learned more from young people; it was good to go to workshops with young people running them. In one workshop an adult kept butting in. It would be better if young people write and present the workshop using different ways of speech, but they need some adult support. Young people also made short speeches at the end thanking those who took part and the Council for funding the day.



Was November a good time of year?

The dates were chosen, as they did not conflict with other events in the school year such as SATS and external exams. Young people suggested that if the event took place in the summer it could include outdoor activities. It was also suggested that it could form part of the Activities week, although it was pointed out that with competition from horse riding and surfing it may not be popular. Another possible time would be early October.

Primary and Secondary Days

Some young people thought that primary and secondary pupils should work in partnership and go to one conference. They would go to different workshops. It would be better if groups could mix and mingle more so they get to know others from different schools. There was also comment that age separation for days was good.

Were we listened to?

I felt very proud of what we achieved as a group through Kidz Tlk Plymouth Conference. To be involved in such a big project right from the start and to see our ideas put into action made me feel very privileged.

I thought the conference was an excellent two days, and was exactly what we wanted it to be if not better!

"Yes we had our say. I really enjoyed it and it was good to have a say in what I thought about Plymouth. Students should know they can make a difference. "

Graffiti Wall

One suggestion was this could be called an ideas wall. You could say what you liked - no forms. You could write anything - highlights of the day.

Comments from Primary day on 22 November:

- ❖ It was totally amazing, fantastic
- ❖ This is a really good and fun day and I've learnt a lot
- ❖ I think that today was really good and I'm glad I came
- ❖ I'm glad I finally got to say what I think
- ❖ We are changing our own future and are having fun as well.

Comments from secondary day on 23 November:

- ❖ Today has been brilliant so far and this board is good
- ❖ This is the best day ever
- ❖ Lots of different things to do and I had a nice day
- ❖ It was good they took our opinion
- ❖ Today was great, thank you for a brill day
- ❖ I think the conference is fun and I really liked it.

Voice it

This was a room where you could record comments. It needed to be more accessible. I felt it was a bit more open to say what you like. This is what the young people said.

What would you change about Plymouth?

- ❖ I'd change the rubbish
- ❖ Clean up public toilets
- ❖ More accommodation, cheaper housing
- ❖ More things to do that don't cost much
- ❖ I would change the territorial side of Plymouth
- ❖ More events
- ❖ Places for people of our age to hang out

Have you found the conference useful?

- ❖ Yes, shows you can do something you never knew you could do.

- ❖ I have found out there are a lot more things to do
- ❖ Making the speech, I was nervous, but it has really helped our confidence
- ❖ I realised how much disabled children go through
- ❖ Its good to bring everyone together
- ❖ Something we wouldn't normally do, it's something interesting and different, fun, it tells us about stuff we can get involved in.

Workshops

Changing Families

It was about how your parents split up and what effect it has on you and why. It helped me because it explained why they argue. Parents have to argue to get along. It helped me knowing that. It doesn't affect me as much as it used to now I



know that arguing can help as I know that arguing about their problems clears them up. It was about sharing and learning how to cope. It helped me by exploring why parents argue and how to cope with it. They told us what makes us dislike our parents arguing. They asked us what we feel when our parents argued

Having young people leading the workshop was quite good actually as it was showing what it was like to be a teenager and what you would be like. It could have been a bit longer, but the time we were there was really good. I liked the role-play part.

This is good because it helps people and shows that feelings are the same as others.

I think this is a good idea to have in schools; it gives the kids some support and lets them know they are being heard.

School Council

I thought this workshop was great and very useful. The children were very brave to do it. Now I know how to run an election. You taught me a lot about school council. It was interesting to learn how other schools hold elections.

Chaucer Way School Council

I know that when you hold an election, what you vote stays secret.

Street and Break Dancing

I really enjoyed street dance. I thought it was a good way to wake us up. I thought that it gave a good insight to some peoples likes in music. I found the high energy to get people involved. I thought Toby who was taking the session was very friendly and was very good at communicating to the grou

Plymouth REC



Rather hard but it was cool

I think this guy's wicked! It was loud and buzzing.

Mapping Plymouth

North Plymouth Outreach Project

I thought the mapping of Plymouth was good as we could find out what others thought of other places. I would like it in our school as the council will know what places are safe and which need more safety. We were able to give feedback at the workshop. Overall it was fun.



I liked it because it gives you a chance to speak out and give your view about Plymouth. Good or Bad.
I like this workshop as it is fun and you learn things like where places are safe and where other people feel safe and unsafe.

Working Together

Plymouth Youth Afloat

We learnt how to solve situations. We learnt how to trust other people that we did not know. There was not much time to plan. They say things but let others do it.

It was fun and now I know that teamwork is important.
"I made a good friend with a helper and I think that teenagers and primaries are not bad together!"

Disability Awareness

Beckly Centre

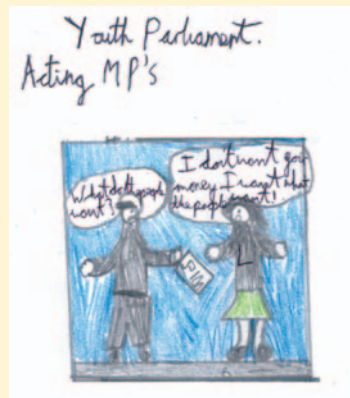
The Beckly Centre talk was great because we were able to do sign language. We also liked the fact that we were able to go around in a wheelchair. The leader was using a puppet to talk to us. It wasn't complicated so it could have been aimed at younger children. We learned about what words we should/shouldn't use. I liked the fact that at the end we were able to look around and see all the different resources.



Knowing what it feels like because I have seen kids with disabilities but never felt like one.
I liked the discussions and activities.

Youth Parliament

The workshop was good because young people were in charge and I got to express my thoughts on politicians. We could say what we wanted to improve and they would try to improve it. Good job. However, we didn't have enough time, and the assistants did not take part enough. It would be even better if we had more time and could share ideas from our schools.

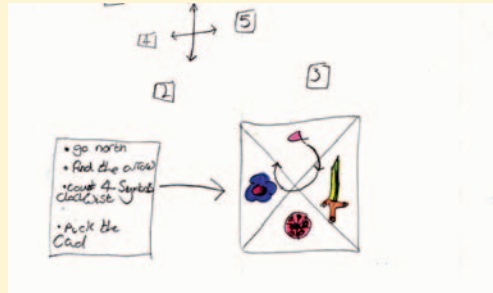


Useful knowing what's happening in the community. Things that I didn't know were happening.
I think this workshop was very good. Everyone got their opinion in, also people in charge of it were younger than other workshops.
Very interesting, enjoyable. I didn't know it existed.

Playground games

It was great fun making up your own games. I thought it was very fun and some of the games were very hard but fun at the same time. The children should invent more of our games than the teachers.

Stonehouse Playspace



"If you are by yourself and there is equipment out you can make you own game up."

Planning Plymouth's Future

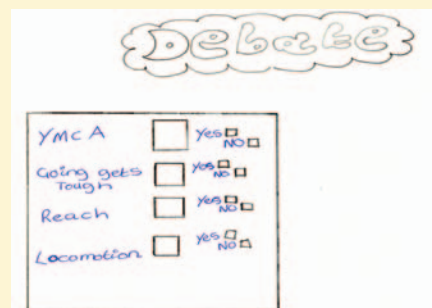
Plymouth Planning Department

On the primary day we looked at Central Park. First we worked out how big the park is. Then thought about our likes and dislikes such as rubbish, swings and open spaces and what we wanted more of.

On the secondary day we were given an ideal and had to decide whether it was



a something we thought was alright, we loved or was rubbish. We were given ideas such as taking down the church. We also were able to say what we thought about the Barbican. It was very relaxed, we all sat on the floor and it was quite informal. Most people got involved.

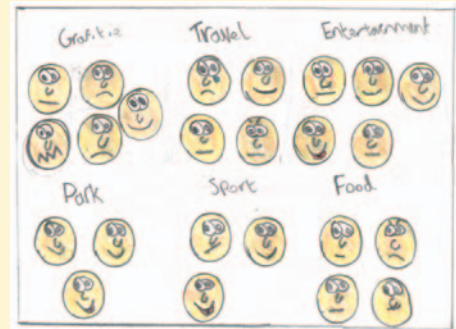


I really enjoyed it and it was good to have a say in what I thought about Plymouth.
It helped to make me think about what can be done in the future of the Barbican and pros and cons.
Good, but should be longer session with the whole of Plymouth looked at.

About the Zone

At this workshop we did a quiz, which was fun, but we learned about the services offered by the Zone and other background information.

It was fun we did a buzzer quiz.
It was excellent
Rather competitive but good fun.



Drumming

Each session over the two days ended with a communal workshop lead by Phil Spurr from the Sound House using junk band instruments. It was good to let steam off and it was nice to make lots of noise and have fun. It would be good to make a performance. I learnt there are lots of ways to hit a drum. This has influenced me to think about re-using containers.

You really got to take your anger out and have fun.
I think the best part was at the end with the drums.



Everyone joined in the fun at the end

Ideas for other workshops

More arty choices such as clay, origami, mosaic, joint art work where a large piece of art could be produced and displayed publicly afterwards.

Rapping would be fun

Other music or dance choices

Sports

Cartoon drawing

Drama and other interactive activities, less talking.

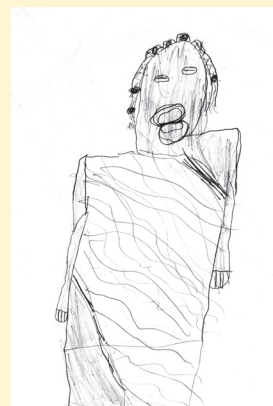
What was good?

Coming together at the end and finishing on a high

Good venue

Fruit and water

Coloured stickers to denote workshops.



What would make the day better?

More colourful decorations.

The display area should be bigger and more child-friendly.

More active workshops on the secondary day.

Introduction of sporting activities

Space to go outside at break.

Longer day with more workshops which were longer (5 - 10 minutes extra)

Information packs for young people attending.

Pupils to pick own workshops (some schools allocated them)

The last workshop could be a choice of activity which could bring everyone together such as Street Dance and art or clay.

Make it bigger and put more things in it.

Did young people share the information?

I shared it with friends. I was asked to speak in assembly, but had no time to prepare. We shared it within the school council. Two pupils were preparing a Power Point presentation to show at school.

Ideas for the future

Young people were unanimous in wanting another event. They considered a summer, outdoor festival, and discussed paying to go, or holding it at the weekend. The venue was liked, and others were considered. They agreed that the Guildhall was not suitable. They enjoyed meeting pupils from other schools and working together in workshops.

Put out more activities/challenges in the hall.

"This day was really great"

What did the teaching staff that went think?

The children thoroughly enjoyed it but a chance to visit more workshops would have been beneficial. Great. It was a really different opportunity for the children. I thought it was well-run and the workshops were excellent. I thought it was a great way for children to learn about issues in Plymouth and gave them a good chance to discuss with their peers. Well organised, good venue, very enjoyable, children found it interesting. Great idea! - surprised at the number of schools not there. It would be useful to organise something for the accompanying adults e.g. an overview of what could be done in schools to promote children's involvement in having a say. Many schools offered to be involved in developing future events.



What did the display providers think?

Brilliant day. All young people seemed interested and excited by the day. Great



way of reaching a fair representation of children. Great for networking with other professionals. The conference has been a really useful means of telling schools and other agencies about our project, looking at ways we can work together.

Conclusions from Participation Team

The event was a great success and should be repeated. Experience from this event

should be used in future planning. A longer time frame should be allowed to plan another event, to allow for full involvement of a wide age range of children and young people in the planning process.

Young people who help on the day should be from a variety of schools and should be trained to work together and given clear responsibilities and involved in the running of the event. The event should receive maximum publicity before hand and on the day to ensure full coverage of the positive message.

In short we should do it again and be more ambitious!

Outcomes from Every Child Matters

❖ Say Safe

Children and young people are safe from bullying

Children and young people provided with a safe environment.

I thought the workshop was fun and it made me feel safe

❖ Enjoy and Achieve

Informed of activities/opportunities

I learned that there are quite a lot of support groups in Plymouth
It was fun and now I know teamwork is important.

❖ Make a positive contribution

Children and young people are encouraged to participate in decision-making and in supporting the community

Children and young people have the opportunity to provide mentoring support to others.

Children and young people are informed of community volunteering opportunity.

Children and young people develop positive relationships and choose not to bully or discriminate

Children and young people are supported in developing socially and emotionally.

Children and young people with disabilities are fully engaged.

I learned you can do a lot of things to help
I liked it because it gives you a chance to speak out and give your view

Acknowledgements

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