



**gendered
intelligence**

understanding gender diversity
in creative ways

Trans Youth Support Work 2009 - 2011

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TRANS YOUTH SUPPORT WORK

AIMS OF THE PROJECT

Our Gendered Intelligence youth group was set up in February 2009 beginning with a four-week consultation with its members. In 2010 Gendered Intelligence was funded by the Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to carry out a Trans Youth Support Work Project.

THE FOLLOWING EHRC AIMS PROVIDED US WITH THE FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH TO CARRY OUT OUR WORK:

- To increase opportunities for communities to set up organisations that represent and respond to their interests and needs where none currently exist; and for existing organisations and services to expand and develop their expertise and services.
- For individuals, particularly those that suffer inequality and disadvantage, to have greater choice, control and empowerment over their own lives in relation to social care, health, housing, education, employment and business advice.
- For victims of all forms of hate crime to receive the support they need and have the confidence to continue their everyday lives.

FROM THIS OUR TRANS YOUTH SUPPORT WORK PROJECT'S KEY AIM WAS:

- to increase the visibility and quality of young transgendered people's life experiences from across England, who typically suffer inequality and disadvantage by implementing a greater choice, control and empowerment over their lives



WE AIMED TO ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Setting up and running a fortnightly youth group for young trans and questioning people from across England in order to provide an opportunity for young trans people and those questioning their gender identity to share and discuss personal issues and to socialise with other trans people. Here they would be able to access information, peer support and guidance in order to make choices over their own lives in relation to family life, school and college, their emotional and mental well-being, as well as housing and employment.
- Carrying out a needs assessment on 40 young trans people accessing our services, offering intensive one-to-one support and setting goals in conjunction with each young person
- Increasing knowledge around transphobic hate crime and transphobic hate crime prevention for young trans people
- Working with 10 key workers such as teachers, head teachers, social workers and housing officers among others, who are working closely with any one individual young trans person in order to increase their understandings of gender and transgender identities in order that they can better support their client sufficiently.
- Work with 10 parents and family members by increasing their understandings of gender and transgender identities in order that they can better support their loved one sufficiently.

STEERING PANEL

In order to support and advise the Trans Youth Support Work project, a monthly meeting with a steering group was set up. This provided an opportunity to discuss day-to-day activities of the project, tackle problems that arose and make decisions that took the project forward. At these meetings information prepared by the Trans Youth Support Worker and the Chair of Gendered Intelligence was presented which offered updates and points for discussion. These meetings were minuted and an agenda was raised by the Chair to create action points and to mark decisions made.

Throughout the duration of the project, there were 11 members of the steering group. From the Gendered Intelligence team there were: Chair of Gendered Intelligence, Jay Stewart; Trans Youth Support Worker, Finn Greig; administrative support for Gendered Intelligence, Karen Burton; and Andolie Marguerite, Eliah Hannes, Octavian Starr (all volunteers or interns for Gendered Intelligence).

The steering group members also included: senior youth worker, Karen Algacs; Operations Manager of PACE Catriona Cormack; Domestic Abuse caseworker, Catherine Bewley; Trans Inclusion Policy Advisor, Ben Gooch; and Chartered Clinical Psychologist, Dr Erasmo Tacconelli.



OUR MEMBERS

As part of the youth group we established a membership scheme. Young people accessing our youth group on more than one occasion were asked to sign up to the scheme. Over the course of the project 65 young people attended the youth group and 58 of those became members. All members are between ages of 13 – 24 years with the majority between 18 – 22 years. 8 of our members are under 18 years. On average 12 young people attended each session.

4 of our members described their ethnic background as black British; 14 said they were mixed race or of mixed heritage; 1 was Irish and 1 was Middle Eastern identified, with the remaining 38 young people identifying as white British or white European. 32 of our members are full time students; 15 are unemployed. The gender identity and the sexual orientation of our young members is demonstrated in this chart below:

IN TERMS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION OUR MEMBERS IDENTIFIED AS:

- 1 lesbian
- 8 gay
- 3 bisexual
- 14 heterosexual

IN ADDITION TO THESE CATEGORIES, OUR MEMBERS IDENTIFY THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS USING THE FOLLOWING MORE COMPLEX, NUANCED AND HIGHLY INDIVIDUALISED WORDS. THESE WERE:

- 8 queer
- 14 pansexual
- 1 pancuddly
- 4 not stated
- 1 homoflexible,
- 1 complicated
- 4 questioning



CAPTURING JOURNEYS AND SETTING GOALS - A GLANCE

A SUMMARY

The Capturing Journeys and Setting Goals Project is a needs assessment tool, which was carried out with 40 young trans people from across England in 2010 and 2011. It involved a series of one to one interviews that were carried out by our staff at regular intervals throughout the project. This was done in order to capture current and recent experiences of young trans people; to identify any needs; to discuss overarching visions of their lives and to set goals in order that they can take their life forward. For an extensive account of this work see our Capturing Journeys and Setting Goals Report which looks to gather many of these experiences, aims and aspirations and offer some analysis around them.

HOW THE INTERVIEWS WORKED

In order to structure an interview with a young trans person, a form was designed by members of the steering group and our trans youth support worker. Each form was to be completed in conversation with a Gendered Intelligence staff member. The discussion centred firstly around “capturing your journey” of life as a young person and then by “setting goals”. When answering these questions we were keen to know what was happening for the young trans person now, and in for example the last 6 months or so. The worker used the form as a prompt as the conversation developed. This was to get a deeper understanding of their needs and hopefully offer better and more appropriate support. If there was anything a young person would rather not answer or discuss that was respected.

Key features of this report centred on resilience and identity. This includes gender identity, sexual orientations, cultural background, religion and belief and disabilities. The interviews focused on a young person’s life in the areas of health, social world (including housing and community), learning world and employment as well as seeking to analyse the lived experiences of young trans people from across England. Some of the findings of these interviews fed into our provision at Gendered Intelligence, in particular the Gendered Intelligence youth group.



KEY FINDINGS

Key features of this report centred on resilience and identity. Through the interviews Gendered Intelligence was struck by the vast range of coping skills young trans people seem to adopt in response to the difficulties they have faced.

"JUST BEING TRANS DEVELOPS RESILIENCE." MTF, 23

IDENTITY

We asked the young people about their gender identity, sexual orientations, cultural background, religion and belief and disabilities. Of the 40 participants 8 identified as male or boy (20%), 14 identified as a trans man or FTM (35%), 4 identified as female or girl (10%) and 5 identified as a trans woman or MTF (12.5%).

The remaining 9 participants (22.5%) identified as outside of the gender binary. This breaks down as 5 identified as Gender queer (12.5%), 1 identified as Fluid (2.5%), 1 identified as Non-gendered (2.5%), 1 identified as FTM Questioning (2.5% and 1 identified as Questioning (2.5%).

REGIONS

Of the 40 participants 16 live in London (40%). In addition 12 live in the Home Counties (30%). This breaks down as 6 living in Surrey, 2 in East Sussex, 1 in West Sussex, 1 in Hertfordshire, 1 in Berkshire and 1 in Essex. The remaining 12 of the 40 live further a field (30%). This breaks down as 2 living in Bristol, 2 living in Portsmouth, and 1 living in each of the following cities and regions: Oxford, Dorset, Cambridge, Hereford, Leicester, Manchester, Liverpool and Nottingham.

Ethnic background and faith 26 young people identified themselves as White British (65%); 3 identified as Black British (7.5%); 9 identified as mixed race (22.5%); 1 identified as Middle Eastern (2.5%) and 1 identified as Irish (2.5%) Of the 40 young participants 35 (87.5%) of them did not identify with any particular faith or belief, whilst 2 identified as Christians (5%), 1 as Buddhist (2.5%) and 1 identified as Muslim (2.5%).

SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS

Of the 40 participants 4 identified as heterosexual (10%), 0 identified as lesbian (0%), 6 identified as Gay (15%) and 3 identified as Bisexual (7.5%). Because sexual orientation categories rely on gender identity categories, many of our young trans people identified as outside of the sexual orientations - heterosexual or LGB. Instead 11 identified as pansexual (27.5%), 5 identified as queer (12.5%), 2 identified as Homoflexible (5%), 1 identified as Pancuddly (2.5%) and 1 identified as 'into men. (2.5%). In addition 2 would rather not say (5%), 4 said they were Questioning (10%)



DISABILITIES AND LONG-TERM ILLNESSES

The young trans people that we interviewed disclosed a range of physical health needs, disabilities and specific learning difficulties. Of the 40 participants 13 have a disability or long-term illness (32.5%). This breaks down as 6 having registered physical disabilities (15%) and 7 have specific learning difficulties (17.5%) including four who have dyslexia; two have dyspraxia and one young person has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and dyscalculia.

TRANS INVISIBILITY

Young trans people are largely invisible with 10 of the 40 (25%) living stealth (where no one in their every day life know that they are trans). In addition, a further 6 (15%) have not come out as trans or gender queer within their education, workplace, home life or within their local setting. Of course of those who are visible as trans, either having recently come out as trans to the people around them or not passing in their self identified gender, this does not mean that those young people choose to be visible.

“I WOULDN’T CONSIDER BEING OUT AS TRANS IN MY JOB. MAYBE I’D CONSIDER BEING OUT AS GAY.” MALE, 23.

“EVEN THOUGH I DON’T LIKE BEING TRANS I’M NOT KEEN ON TRANS INVISIBILITY. I WOULDN’T BE STEALTH.” NON-GENDERED, 21.

EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Emotional wellbeing is a key area of concern for young trans people. Of the 40 participants 12 (30%) suffer or have suffered from depression including 3 (7.5%) are living with severe depression including bipolar, 25 (62.5%) describe themselves as having low confidence, insecurities and low self-worth, 22 (55%) claim to feel socially anxious regularly and 12 (30%) are currently self harming or at some time in the recent past have self harmed.

“I FEEL GENERAL STRESS BECAUSE I FEEL LEFT OUT OF SOCIETY AND I FEEL DIFFERENT IN SO MANY WAYS. I HAVE A DISABILITY, I’M TRANS AND ASEXUAL.” TRANS GUY, 22



"THERE ARE MOMENTS WHEN I'M OVERWHELMED BY LOW CONFIDENCE WHEN I AM GETTING READY TO GO OUT. I CAN CHANGE MY T-SHIRT LOADS OF TIMES. I FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE WAY THAT I LOOK. I HAVE DISCOMFORT WITH MY VOICE – IT'S A REALLY FEMININE PART OF ME. IT GIVES ME AWAY A LOT WHEN I'M PASSING AS A GUY. I NEVER THOUGHT I WAS THAT BOthered BY MY APPEARANCE BUT THAT WILL STOP ME GOING OUT. I'LL PANIC." TRANS MAN, 22

"I STARTED SELF HARMING WHEN I WAS 12 AND IT WAS CONSISTENT UNTIL I WAS 19 UNTIL I STARTED HORMONES." FTM, 23

"I WAS IN A PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL FOR 18 MONTHS WHEN I WAS 14. I HAD TO HAVE STITCHES 4 TIMES PER WEEK THROUGH SELF HARMING. I SELF HARMED LAST WEEK. THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME IN 10 MONTHS. IT DIDN'T NEED STITCHES. SOMETIMES I SELF HARM SO THAT I CAN CONTROL THAT ASPECT OF MY LIFE AND FEEL BETTER ABOUT OTHER PARTS OF MY LIFE." MALE, 21

"I DIDN'T MAKE FRIENDS IN COLLEGE. I TENDED TO STAY AWAY FROM PEOPLE. THERE WAS A BUNCH OF PEOPLE FROM MY OLD SECONDARY SCHOOL WHO MADE ME FEEL UNSAFE. IT FELT SAFER TO NOT KNOW ANYONE AT ALL. AT THAT TIME I WAS QUITE VULNERABLE AND THERE WERE PEOPLE WHO HAD IT IN FOR ME. BY THE END OF COLLEGE I WAS SO ISOLATED AND DEPRESSED THAT I WAS FINDING IT HARD TO KEEP CARING. THERE WAS NO SOCIAL INTERACTION AT COLLEGE. I STOPPED ENJOYING THE LESSONS AND I WASN'T CONFIDENT TO DO WELL IN EXAMS. WHEN I WAS YOUNGER I ALWAYS HAD 100% ATTENDANCE BUT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO ATTEND COLLEGE. I WAS USUALLY LATE. DAYS WOULD GO BY AND THE ONLY WORDS I WOULD SAY WERE 'SORRY I'M LATE'." WOMAN (MTF), 19



SERVICES ACCESSED BY YOUNG TRANS PEOPLE

In response to these mental health and emotional wellbeing needs, we asked the participants if they were accessing relevant support services. We found that 3 (7.5%) are accessing counselling through their GP, CAMHS or local provision, 2 (5%) are accessing counselling through their student support services, 25 (62.5%) of our young people are accessing a Gender Identity Clinic, 6 LGBT youth groups have been accessed across England by those 40 participants and 1 young person (2.5%) has had a Connexions worker.

“I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH MY GIC IN SEPTEMBER. I WENT TO A LOCAL PSYCHIATRIST IN 2008 [THREE YEARS AGO] BUT THEY PUT OFF MY REFERRAL BECAUSE I HADN’T GONE OUT IN FEMININE CLOTHING. I’VE SAVED MONEY ON A PRIVATE DOCTOR. NORMALLY I’M QUITE BAD AT SAVING. I DON’T GET A LOT OF MONEY AND SO IT TOOK A WHILE. I TRIED THE SELF-MEDICATION THING FOR TWO MONTHS, BUT PEOPLE WERE WORRIED. THAT WHY I DECIDED TO SAVE. I THOUGHT THE MONEY I WOULD SPENT ON THAT COULD BE PUT TOWARDS SAVING AND THAT WOULD BE SAFER.” FEMALE, 24

LEARNINGS AND MOVING FORWARD

From the series of interviews, in order to improve lives of young trans people we need to:

- raise confidence and self worth in young trans people
- decrease isolation and social anxiety in young trans people
- increase the social networks of young trans people
- provide spaces for young people to explore their gender identity and feelings
- ensure a successful coming out experience defined by the young person
- provide smooth social and medical transitions

“TRANSITIONING HAS HELPED ME FEEL A LOT MORE CONFIDENT AND ABLE TO INTERACT WITH MY PEERS AND OTHER PEOPLE.” TRANS MAN, 22

“I’M FEELING A LOT HAPPIER ABOUT WHO I AM AT THE MOMENT. IT COMES FROM HAVING SUPPORTIVE PEOPLE AROUND ME WHO APPRECIATE ME.” MTF, 23



GENDERED INTELLIGENCE YOUTH GROUP ACTIVITIES

Bringing young trans people together provides an opportunity for young trans people to share and discuss personal issues and to socialise with other trans people. This has been found to increase good mental health and well being. Many young trans people feel isolated and vulnerable. The Gendered Intelligence youth group offers an opportunity to explore identity without anxiety allowing young people to make self-informed decisions about their lives. In 2009 we set up this project in accordance with the young people's needs and interests. Our members told us that these ranged from creative, social and leisure activities such as yoga, art, film, music making as well as drama. They also told us that they wished to explore themes such as representations in the media, political campaigning, storytelling, sexual health, relationships and intimacy, family relations and school life among others. The staff at Gendered Intelligence put together a programme of positive activities which looked to explore the above, as well as other topics such as 'coming out' to family, friends, employers and teachers; approaching GPs and medical practitioners; language and terminology; mental health and well being; sex and relationships education; transitioning; legal rights; addressing transphobic hate crime; dealing with financial issues and job prospects.

In this section we outline the various activities we facilitated including details of the number of participants involved and feedback from those participants.

CONSULTING YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR PROGRAMMING OF EVENTS. SESSIONS HELD ON SATURDAY 13TH FEBRUARY 2010, WEDNESDAY 24TH FEBRUARY 2010

These two initial sessions comprised the consultation outlined above. Responses include those things listed above plus requests for sports sessions, social meetings; Voice- teaching; Social events e.g. films, bowling and trips out; dance lessons; discussing surgery; how to have kids. One person said that they wished to have discussions relating to emotional and well being issues regarding gender identity, but something more discussion based rather than professional therapy or counselling.

At these sessions we had 14 attendees. Some of the responses to how they felt the sessions went were:

“I FOUND IT USEFUL CLARIFYING PLANS.”

“I LEARNT THAT WE HAVE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE OUR OWN PATH ON TREATMENT.”

“I LEARNT THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU THROUGH YOUR TRANSITION.”

“I ENJOYED MEETING OTHER PEOPLE AND LISTENING TO STORIES.”



SELF-EXPRESSION THROUGH IMAGE

SESSION HELD ON SATURDAY 15TH MAY 2010

This session was facilitated by guest artists, Bird La Bird and Naechane Valentino. The session allowed the young people to experiment with self-expression and gender identity using clothes, make up, facial hair, drag and more. They were given tips on how to explore masculinity and femininity.

At this session we had 9 attendees. Some of the responses to how they felt the sessions went were:

“I liked pretty much everything. The staff were really friendly and welcoming and provided a great, positive day. The only thing I disliked was that it was over so soon!”

“One thing that was mentioned on the day was the lack of juice. There was lots of food, but the drinks ran out really quickly.”

VOICE & CONFIDENCE

SESSION HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26TH MAY 2010

This session was facilitated by guest voice coach, Rebecca Root. This workshop helped the young people to gain confidence using their existing voice and connect to their bodies through the use of vocal sound and projection.

At this session we had 7 attendees. Some of the responses to how they felt the sessions went were:

“I’VE LEARNT HOW TO TALK FROM MY ABDOMEN.”

“I ENJOYED RELEASING SELF-EXPRESSION.”

“I LEARNT A LOT OF THINGS I DIDN’T KNOW AND HADN’T CONSIDERED. I HAVE BECOME MORE CONFIDENT AND COMFORTABLE WITH MY VOICE.”

“I’VE LEARNT THAT SWALLOWING WHEN NERVOUS LOWERS THE LARYNX.”

“I FOUND USEFUL THE BREATHING EXERCISES.”

“IT WAS A FANTASTIC SESSION AND WOULD LOVE TO DO IT AGAIN.”

“I ENJOYED BEING SILLY.”

“I FOUND USEFUL LEARNING HOW TO CONTROL PITCH.”

SPORTS DAY & PICNIC

SESSION HELD ON SATURDAY 12TH JUNE 2010

The session ran in Regents Park. We hoped to provide a safe and fun environment for young trans people who might not usually engage with public leisure facilities. There was a game of rounders, an obstacle race, egg and spoon run, sack racing and 3-legged running competitions! At this session we had 9 attendees.

“FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE WERE ALSO INVITED. THIS CREATED A LOVELY AND RESPECTFUL COMMUNITY ATMOSPHERE.”

FINN GREIG, TRANS YOUTH SUPPORT WORKER

HORMONES AND SURGERY WORKSHOP

SESSION HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23RD JUNE 2010

This session looked at the effects and possibilities of hormones and surgery. There were discussions with invited older trans people, who had made different decisions in their life concerning hormones and surgery.

At this session we had 12 attendees. Some of the responses to how they felt the session went were:

“I’VE NEVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TO OR HEAR FROM OLDER TRANS PEOPLE, I FOUND IT VERY VALUABLE.”

“I FOUND THIS THE MOST USEFUL SESSION SO FAR.”

“I LEARNT THAT WE HAVE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE OUR OWN PATH ON TREATMENT.”

“I LEARNT THAT I HAVE A CHOICE AND MY EXPERIENCE IS INDIVIDUAL TO ME.”

“I REALLY ENJOYED MEETING NEW PEOPLE AND LEARNING FROM OTHERS EXPERIENCES.”



DRAMA: SHARING STORIES

SESSION HELD ON SATURDAY 10TH JULY

This session was led by Sophie Wyburn, a graduate and intern from Central School of Speech & Drama and explored the use of theatre methods to share positive and negative stories of trans-specific experiences from school, youth groups, college, university, music class, hobby groups and others. Through improvisation the group found creative ways to get better or offer solutions for situations they felt uncomfortable. The session was carried out as part of the Mermaids Residential.

At these sessions we had 8 attendees. Some of the responses to how they felt the sessions went were:

“THANK YOU FOR COMING [TO MERMAIDS RESIDENTIAL] AND LETTING US ENJOY THIS DAY.”

“I FOUND USEFUL SHARING OUR STORIES BECAUSE YOU LEARN TO KNOW SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF OTHER TRANS PEOPLE’S LIVES.”

“I FOUND USEFUL BEING ABLE TO FACE MY PREVIOUS STRUGGLES IN A NEW WAY WITH NEW PEOPLE.”

“I REALLY ENJOYED BEING IN FRONT OF PEOPLE AND SHARING AND UNDERSTANDING ONE ANOTHER’S EXPERIENCES.”

NAME CHANGING AND LEGAL PRACTICALITIES

SESSION HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28TH JULY 2010

This session looked at changing your name legally, how to obtain a Gender Recognition Certificate if desired, how to change documentation related to Criminal Record Bureau checks, birth certificates, National Insurance records, medical cards, old school records and passports etc. as well as looking at employment rights.

At this sessions we had 15 attendees.

“THERE WAS A LOT OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE ROOM AND MOST OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE HAD ALREADY SORTED A LOT OF THEIR DOCUMENTS ETC. SOME VERBAL FEEDBACK, AND THE STAFF REFLECTIONS AFTER WERE THAT THIS WAS NOT A HUGELY USEFUL SESSION TO A LOT OF THEM, HOWEVER REALLY CRUCIAL TO A FEW. ONE WAY ROUND THIS WOULD BE TO PROVIDE THIS AS A SEPARATE SESSION TO THE YOUTH GROUP CALENDAR AND PERHAPS GET SOME OF THE OLDER YOUNG PEOPLE TO RUN IT AS PEERS FOR THOSE WHO ARE NEW TO THE PROCESS AND UNDERSTANDING THE SYSTEMS.”

FINN, GREIG, TRANS YOUTH SUPPORT WORKER



CANOEING TRIP AND SUMMER CAMPING WEEKEND

SESSION HELD ON SATURDAY 14TH AUGUST- MONDAY 16TH AUGUST 2010

Activities included canoeing, team games and a walk in the forest. Workshops carried out were: healthy relationships and safe sex; coming out stories round the campfire; planning a youth group project

12 people attended the canoeing trip and 8 attended the camping trip. This excerpt comes from a 22 year old trans woman who went on the canoeing trip. It highlights both the importance of access to sport for trans people, and some of the issues around it:

“BEFORE I WENT ON THE WATER I FELT EXCITED, GLAD TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO IT, RELAXED AND IN A GOOD MOOD, COMFORTABLE, AND VERY RELIEVED NOT TO HAVE THE USUAL WORRIES I DO WHEN IT COMES TO SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY. NORMALLY I FEEL SOME ANXIETY OVER HOW I LOOK AND PASS AND OVER THE PRACTICALITIES OF CHANGING, AND OF DISGUIISING CERTAIN ATTRIBUTES OR THEIR LACK. I ENJOYED THE SHEER JOY OF PHYSICAL EXERCISE, AND EVEN BETTER THE COMPANIONABILITY THAT COMES WITH IT WHEN IT'S DONE AS PART OF A GROUP. I REALLY MISS THAT SINCE TRANSITIONING. THE WORLD OF SPORT AND GROUP ACTIVITY OFTEN FEELS VERY GENDERED TO ME, AND MUCH HARDER TO AVOID AWKWARDNESS WITHIN. AND FALLING IN. THAT WAS QUITE FUN! ONE THING I LEARNT WAS THAT THE ENJOYMENT AND SATISFACTION I GET OUT OF SPORT, EXERCISE, AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS PROBABLY WORTH THE AWKWARDNESS I'D INITIALLY FEEL ABOUT DOING IT. I THINK THIS CANOEING MAY BE THE CATALYST I NEEDED TO START ENGAGING WITH THAT PART OF SOCIETY AGAIN.”

PLANNING A SOFFA'S EVENT (SIGNIFICANT OTHERS, FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND ALLIES)

SESSION HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER 2010

As the youth group progressed it was felt that we should gather parents, partners, friends and family members together. This session asked: What kind of event would you like for a SOFFA's day? What kind of issues are there for our SOFFAs relating to us being trans or genderqueer? And how might we share our experiences in a safe environment?

At these sessions we had 11 attendees. Some of the responses to how they felt the sessions went were:

“I ENJOYED MEETING OTHER TRANS/ GENDER QUEER PEOPLE AND BEING ACCEPTED AND SEEN FOR WHO I AM.”

“I HAVE LEARNT THAT OTHER PEOPLE HAVE SIMILAR EXPERIENCES AND THE SUNNY SIDE OF MY OWN EXPERIENCES.”

“I FOUND USEFUL CREATING A MIND MAP TO THINK ABOUT THOSE WHO ARE CLOSE TO ME AND WHAT IT HAS BEEN LIKE COMING OUT TO THEM AND CONSIDERING THEIR FEELINGS.”

“I FOUND USEFUL SEEING WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE SOFFA'S EVENT AND CONTRIBUTING.”

FREE TO BE ME PROJECT - ACTION AGAINST HATE CRIME

SESSIONS HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27TH OCTOBER 2010, SATURDAY 13TH NOV 2010 AND WEDNESDAY 24TH NOV 2010

This small project looked to introduce the topic of Hate Crime to our young members, and looked at knowing one's rights. It was carried out in collaboration with Galop. Galop is an anti-violence charity that works in London with everyone who has experienced homophobia, transphobia and biphobia, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. They also work with people who have experienced any violence, safety issues or problems with the police, but would prefer to talk to a lesbian, gay, bi, trans, or queer community organisation about it. www.galop.org.uk

The message of the project was "If it feels wrong, then it is wrong".

The series of sessions aimed for young trans people to:

- Gain confidence and knowledge in what you should do if you have or were to experience Hate Crime due to your gender expression, or transphobia.
- Share experiences or fears of discrimination, bullying and transphobia, with other young trans people and experienced professionals.
- Learn about rights and responsibilities and work as a group to empower themselves
- Create a mini 'zine on these issues based on young trans people's experiences and to offer it as a resource for other young trans people who may need support around Hate Crime, bullying or transphobia.

SESSION 1

YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUT UP WITH IT! discussed, shared and researched the questions of what Hate Crime and transphobia are and what can be done about Hate Crime and transphobia as well as looking at planning the resource (the project was to result in some sort of informational resource, to be agreed with the group).

SESSION 2

"MAKING OUR STORY" introduced practical techniques for making a storyboard and mixed material style comic strip. Everyone contributed to making the images and artwork for the zine booklet using drawing techniques, photography, collage, and text.

SESSION 3

"REACHING THE PEOPLE WHO NEED TO SEE THIS!" reviewed the material produced, picked up on issues that had arisen and made sure everyone felt more informed and confident about their rights, and laws that can help and protect them. The finishing touches were made to the zine. For a copy of the zine go to www.galop.org.uk or www.genderedintelligence.co.uk

For a copy of the zine go to www.galop.org.uk or www.genderedintelligence.co.uk

At these three sessions there were 27 attendees. Some of their responses were:

"I ENJOYED SHARING & DISCUSSING EXPERIENCES & HOW TO CONVEY THIS MOST EFFECTIVELY."

"I ENJOYED GETTING IT FINISHED ON A DEADLINE!"

"IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER HAD THERE BEEN MORE TIME TO PLAN IN MORE DETAIL AND DRAW IN MORE DETAIL."

"I KNOW THAT 'IF IT FEELS WRONG THEN IT IS WRONG'."

"I ENJOYED HOW INCLUSIVE IT WAS. NO MATTER WHAT OUR SKILL, THE WORKSHOPS WERE ACCESSIBLE."

"I HAVE A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT COUNTS AS HATE CRIME/ TRANSPHOBIA. I HAVE A GREATER DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TERMS."

In evaluating these sessions we also asked the attendees some key questions. From the feedback form we had 9 respondents.

1. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE ATTITUDE OF YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY, FAMILY, RESIDENTIAL AREA, SCHOOL AND OR WORK PLACE IN RELATION TO DIVERSE GENDER EXPRESSIONS?

Some of the responses were:

"MY LOCAL COMMUNITY IS GOOD."

"MOST PEOPLE IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY HAVE GENERAL TOLERANCE BUT OFTEN HAVE IGNORANCE/ MISUNDERSTANDING OF HOW TRANS/ GENDER QUEER/ RELATES TO SEXUALITY."

"MY FAMILY HAVE AN AWFUL ATTITUDE, THEY HAVE NO UNDERSTANDING."

"NOT INTOLERANT BUT UNEDUCATED. UNWILLING TO LEARN AND UNDERSTAND."

2. HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED HATE CRIME, BULLYING, HARASSMENT OR DISCRIMINATION BASED ON YOUR GENDER IDENTITY OR GENDER VARIANCE?

8 said yes and 1 said "Not sure, couldn't say"

3. WHAT ARE YOUR STRATEGIES FOR COPING WITH TRANSPHOBIA OR TRANSPHOBIC SITUATIONS AND REPORTING HATE CRIME BEFORE AND AFTER THE PROJECT.

Some responses were:

In the past I have: dealt with feelings on my own; self harmed; drank a lot of alcohol, thought about suicide, attempted suicide, taken drugs

In the future I will: report the hate crime; talk to someone about my feelings; Call Galop, talk to youth worker

SOFFAS (SIGNIFICANT OTHERS, FRIENDS, FAMILY AND ALLIES) EVENT

SATURDAY 11TH DECEMBER 2010

This session was planned with the young trans people, taking on board what they thought Gendered Intelligence facilitators should do, and some of the possible difficulties that may occur depending on how their SOFFA's felt about them or trans people in general. It was decided we should have a good range of activities at different levels, and that we should create different spaces, so that everyone could input in different ways that were comfortable for them. The session was planned in order that SOFFAs could sit and listen to the young trans people and similarly the young people could listen to the perspective of parents and other SOFFAs. Then the large group split up to give the young people and the parents/ carers and the siblings/ friends/ partners their own safe spaces to discuss their experiences and ask questions.

"We predicted that it would be good to have a focus for the meeting and particular tasks and activities for them to do so there may be less pressure for them to talk amongst strangers whilst dealing with emotional and personal issues. We found that beginning from common ground worked and by providing structure and facilitation, they were free to get straight in and discuss the issues in a safe manner." Finn Greig, Trans Youth Support Worker

16 members and 22 SOFFA's attended. Some of the responses were:

"I FELT SUPPORTED AND HAPPY THAT MY PARENTS CAME ALONG FOR ME." **"I LEARNT TO BE TRUTHFUL."**

"IT WAS USEFUL THAT MY MUM CAME ALONG AND SHE WAS ABLE TO SHARE AND MEET LOTS OF TRANS PEOPLE AND ALLIES."

"IT WAS REALLY FRIENDLY, APPROACHABLE AND MADE ME FEEL VERY WELCOME AND COMFORTABLE."

"IT WAS NICE TO HEAR MY DAD SPEAK AND I HOPE THEY'VE LEARNT A FEW THINGS TODAY."

"I FOUND USEFUL UNDERSTANDING THINGS FROM AN EXTERNAL POINT OF VIEW AND APPRECIATING THE DIFFICULTY FOR MY FAMILY/ HOW THEY ARE PROBABLY TRYING A LOT MORE THAN I THINK."

"THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR ME WAS THAT I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK TO OTHER PARENTS WHICH IS SOMETHING I HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO DO BEFORE AS I DON'T REALLY KNOW ANYONE WHO HAS A TRANSGENDER CHILD."

"IT WAS AN EXCELLENT SPACE FOR SOFFAS. WE SHOULD HAVE MORE SESSIONS LIKE THIS NATIONWIDE. MEETING PEOPLE IS FAR MORE SUPPORTIVE THAN INTERNET FORUMS."

GENDERED INTELLIGENCE CHRISTMAS PARTY SESSION HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15TH DECEMBER 2010.

Our young people and the organisation as a whole looked back and celebrated a year of activities and achievements! There were refreshments and entertainment. 12 of our members attended, along with various friends, allies and workers.



TRANS*ACTIVE ACCESSING SPORT – AN LGBT HISTORY MONTH PROJECT TACKLING HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA IN SPORT

SESSIONS HELD BETWEEN 15TH OF JAN 2011 UNTIL END OF FEB 2011

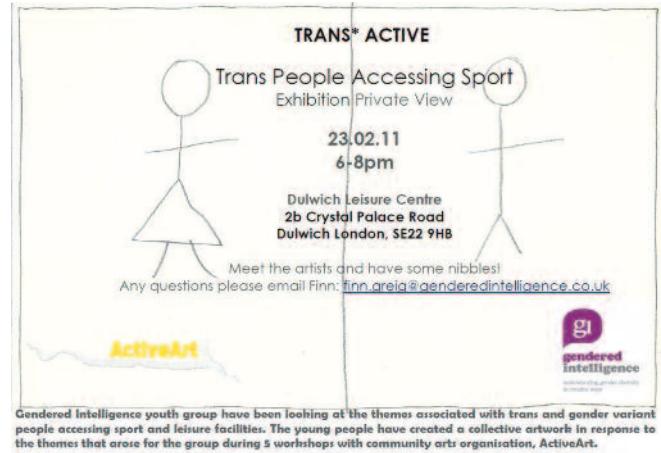
Gendered Intelligence was awarded an LGBT History Month Grant from Southwark lesbian, gay, bisexual trans network to run an arts project with young trans people during February 2011. As part of LGBT History Month, Gendered Intelligence youth group explored themes associated with Trans and Gender Variant people accessing sport. This included the barriers to accessing sport and leisure facilities, what sport meant to the participants individually, and celebrating the trans people that we knew in sport or who we discovered when researching for the project. This small project was carried out in collaboration with ActiveArt and Dulwich Leisure Centre - Fusion. It consisted of 5 half-day workshops, which culminated in a collaborative artwork on the theme of Trans People Accessing Sport. This was presented during LGBT History Month.

The artwork was created together and focused on ways of increasing visibility and understanding of the barriers faced in accessing sport. Creating and exhibiting a piece of artwork on the theme Trans People Accessing Sport offers an opportunity to reflect on, build analysis of and celebrate young people's experiences, whilst also creating a tool to support others to respect and recognise trans life and culture. The artwork comprised of a central figure made up of bubble wrap forming the shape of a human. The body was featured going through a doorway made of wood. This represented barriers to accessing sport, especially with regards to gendered changing facilities. The figure can be seen transitioning through these barriers represented by the door. In addition there was a video piece that was made in response to the three main themes of access, barriers and celebration. To find out more about the project and the individual artists, and also to contribute to the project yourself, please take a look at our blog: trans-active.tumblr.com

Participants learnt how to develop a creative and communicative art-piece from concept to completion as well as how to create an artwork that was based on the experiences and aspirations of the participants. Young trans people gained skills, knowledge and experience in creating an art piece, as well as offering participants a hands-on opportunity in the organisational and production elements of the project, such as workshop preparation, budget management and event publicity.

Over all there were 73 attendees throughout the sessions and on the 23rd February 2011 the project culminated in an exhibition at Dulwich Sport Centre. This was attended by 13 of our young members plus 50 other members of the public, including friends, family and LGBT History Month goers.

As part of the project Gendered Intelligence worked closely with Fusion Leisure Centre staff around the issues of trans people accessing their services. In addition Fusion revised their inclusion policy with regards to trans people using their facilities. Fusion also offered our youth group a private swimming session. The young trans people were given exclusive use of the pool for one hour, for which we would especially like to thank Claire Jenkin, Dominic Horner, Janet from Dulwich Leisure Centre and all their staff team



At the swimming session, we asked our young members a series of questions:

1. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR FEELINGS TOWARDS SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, BEFORE AND AFTER THE SWIM?

Some of the responses were:

“BEFORE I HADN’T THOUGHT ABOUT IT MUCH. I DIDN’T WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT BECAUSE I WOULD REALISE HOW RESTRICTED I FELT. AFTER I REALLY WANT TO PLAY CERTAIN SPORTS AND ACCESS PARTICULAR ACTIVITIES, BUT I STILL FEEL THAT I CAN’T BECAUSE OF MY TRANS STATUS. I ALSO DON’T KNOW WHAT MY RIGHTS ARE. THE PROJECT HAS HELPED ME IN WANTING TO CHALLENGE THIS.”

“BEFORE I FELT NERVOUS, UNKNOWING AND SCARED BECAUSE I NEVER REALLY HAD AN EXPERIENCE UNLIKE SOME PEOPLE IN THE GROUP. AFTER I FELT REALLY CONFIDENT AND KNOWLEDGEABLE.”

“BEFORE, I FELT DISHEARTENED TO TAKE UP ANY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, ESPECIALLY DANCE WHICH IS AN INTEREST OF MINE BUT HAVE FACED DISCRIMINATION IN THE PAST. I FELT TOO NERVOUS TO GO TO A GYM OR LEISURE CENTRE. OVERALL I AVOIDED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BECAUSE IT WAS MORE CONVENIENT TO. AFTER, I STILL FEEL A LOT OF THE NERVES IN REGARDS TO TAKING PART IN SPORT, BUT I FEEL MORE MOTIVATED TO OVERCOME THOSE NERVES AND I FEEL I ACCOMPLISHED SOMETHING WITH THE SWIMMING SESSION.”

“BEFORE THE PROJECT I FELT RESTRICTED. I WAS USED TO THE IDEA OF SPORT BEING A BARRIER AND THE FEELINGS OF BEING AN OUTCAST/DIFFERENT. I WAS AT THE POINT OF DECIDING TO QUIT SPORT COMPLETELY JUST BEFORE THE PROJECT STARTED. MORE ESPECIALLY AFTER THE SWIMMING TRIP I HAVE GAINED A LITTLE BIT MORE CONFIDENCE IN ACCESSING SPORT AND IT IS DEFINITELY SOMETHING I WOULD CONSIDER TAKING UP AGAIN ONCE I HAVE THE CONFIDENCE. THIS PROJECT HAS MADE ME REALISE HOW MUCH I MISSED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.”

2. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR FEELINGS AND ATTITUDES TO MAKING ARTS AS A GROUP? SOME OF THE RESPONSES WERE:

“I’VE DONE ART AS A HOBBY FOR SCHOOL. AFTER THE PROJECT I SEE THAT YOU CAN CHANGE PEOPLE’S VIEWS; EDUCATE THEM POSITIVELY FOR CHANGE BY DOING A EXHIBITION.”

“I’VE ALWAYS BEEN CREATIVE AND ARTISTIC, BUT AS A WAY TO BE ALONE. MAKING ART AS A GROUP WAS NEW TO ME, A BIT OF A CHALLENGE. AFTER THE PROJECT, I STILL FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE EXPRESSING MYSELF ARTISTICALLY ON MY OWN, BUT I ENJOYED OTHER PARTS OF THE PROJECT SUCH AS THE PODCAST, WHICH WAS A FUN GROUP EFFORT.”



PLANNING NEXT QUARTER

WEDNESDAY 23RD MARCH 2011

In this session we used some of the emerging themes from the Capturing Your Journey and Setting Goals project in order to plot out the focus for the next 6 sessions of the youth group. We asked the group to specify exactly what they would like to look at within each session and to tell us how important each of the topics were for them. We also spent part of this session feeding back to them about how we had or intended to work on the comments and recommendations they included in their evaluations. The session was attended by 13 young people.

SOFFAS EVENT

SATURDAY 16TH APRIL 2011

This session mirrored the previous one for Significant Others, Friends, Family and Allies and was an opportunity for those people connected in some way to one of the members of the youth group to come to a session where they can talk to each other and meet other young trans people. 38 participants attended.

TALKING RELATIONSHIPS

WEDNESDAY 27TH APRIL 2011

This session was facilitated by Catherine Bewley from Galop. The idea of the workshop was to look closely at relationships or the ones we might want to have and support the young people to consider how we communicate effectively, how we deal with feelings of jealousy and insecurity, how we might go about finding a relationship safely and when and how we might come out as trans. The session also discussed ideas around healthy relationships, agreeing that this means relationships that make you feel good, are empowering and feel positive.

At this session we had 13 attendees. Some of the responses to how they felt the sessions went were:

“IT WAS VERY HELPFUL AND REMINDED ME THAT IT’S OK TO BE ASSERTIVE AND STAND BY WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO ME WITHIN MY RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE.”

“I FEEL IT WAS GOOD TO EXPRESS IN A GROUP I LOST MY CONFIDENCE AND IT WAS NICE TO SIT WITH RESPECTFUL PEOPLE.”

“JUST THINKING OF MY EX AND THE LAST RELATIONSHIP I WAS IN - IT WASN’T GOOD BUT I NOW KNOW I AM LUCKY BECAUSE I ESCAPED IT.”

“I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO HAVE HAD LONGER WITH MORE ABOUT SUPPORTING YOUR PARTNER (ESPECIALLY AROUND MATTERS OF MENTAL HEALTH, SELF WORTH ETC)”



CV WRITING & JOB SKILLS

SATURDAY 14TH MAY 2011

This session aimed to pool ideas around how we might gain work experience, volunteer opportunities and employed work; how to write a CV and identify the skills we already have when looking for jobs, training courses or volunteering opportunities; as well as asking “what does it mean to be trans or gender variant in the workplace – practically and legally?” The session looked at how your existing skills, interests, hobbies and talents can be transferred into work or job skills and how they can be communicated in a CV and at interview. Attendees also heard from one another around their experiences of being trans at work, whether to come out as trans at work and how that might be done.

At this session we had 11 attendees. Some of the responses to how they felt the sessions went were:

**“IT’S MADE ME LESS SHY AND
REALISE THAT I’M NOT GOING
THROUGH THIS ON MY OWN.”**

**“I PICKED UP SOME USEFUL TIPS ON BEING
TRANS IN THE WORKPLACE.”**

“I ENJOYED THE PEER MENTORING AND THE OUT/ STEALTH DEBATE”

NUTRITION AND HEALTHY EATING

WEDNESDAY 25TH MAY 2011

In this session the group got to eat a nutritious and tasty meal together, to learn about food preparation and eating the right proportions of each food group. There was a strong emphasis on how eating well can help with body image and gender expression.

At this session we had 11 attendees. Some of the responses to how they felt the sessions went were:

**“IT WAS LOVELY TO BE ABLE TO SIT
AND SHARE A MEAL WITH EVERYONE.”**

**“I ENJOYED THE REALLY
GOOD FOOD!”**

**“I GOT TO MEET TRANS PEOPLE
IN A GOOD ENVIRONMENT
LEARNING A BIT ABOUT MYSELF
AND THE CULTURE WHILST
HAVING A GOOD MEAL.”**

**“I ENJOYED LEARNING A LITTLE MORE ABOUT
GOOD FOOD AND NUTRITION.”**

**“I HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF FOOD
AND PORTION SIZES.”**

**“NOW I KNOW HEALTHY FOOD CAN TASTE REAL NICE, EVEN IN THE
TYPE OF FOOD I EAT.”**



WORKING WITH KEY WORKERS, PARENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS

As part of the Trans Youth Support Work project we felt strongly that young trans people's lives can be improved through providing support to key workers such as teachers, headteachers, social workers and housing officers. In addition it is important to work with parents and family members so that they can continue to support their trans child/ relative and receive appropriate support and information.. Gendered Intelligence have helped increase understandings of trans identities among professionals and families and work in this way in order that each young trans person can move forward in their life. This multi-agency approach makes sense, especially where so little is known about trans identities and gender variance.

CASE STUDY 1 - WORKING WITH AN 18 YEAR OLD GENDER QUEER PERSON, HIS TWO CARERS AND HIS HOUSING OFFICER IN LONDON

The Trans Youth Support Worker was asked to offer some trans awareness training to the two potential carers of an 18 year old gender queer member of our Gendered Intelligence youth group. At the time, the young person identified as gender queer, and used the pronoun 'he'. After some time he identified as FTM. The potential carers identified as gay women.

His housing officer was also interested in finding out a little more information about gender identity and how she could better support him in his case and also through her organisation. The discussions centred around the similarities and differences between gender identity and sexual orientation, especially in youth. Their questions were mainly about how they could best support the young person. The worker felt like she was there to facilitate the process of supporting the carers, but commented on the session being useful to her knowledge of the issues. The young person joined the end of the meeting for about half an hour.

The Trans Youth Support Worker left the 'Guide for Parents and Family Members of Trans People in the UK' for the carers and the 'Parents and Family Members of Trans People in the UK A Report on the Issues' for the worker.

At a later date (after the young person had been placed in the carers' home) the Trans Youth Support Worker met with one of the carers to visit their GP. She wanted support on talking to the GP with regards to the health care of the young person. They discussed the young person's rights and the process of referral. The Trans Youth Support Worker left her with the following resources: 'Guidance for GPs, other clinicians and health professionals on the care of gender variant people', 'Reducing health inequalities for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people - briefings for health and social care staff', 'Trans: a practical guide for the NHS' to pass onto the GP.

"I FOUND USEFUL BEING ABLE TO ASK WHAT YOU PERCEIVE TO BE SILLY QUESTIONS, WITHOUT FEAR OF JUDGMENT." CARER.

CASE STUDY 2 – WORKING WITH AN 18 YEAR OLD TRANS MAN, HIS PARENTS, HIS FUTURE EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVE AND AN ADMINISTRATOR OF HIS FUTURE UNIVERSITY PLACE IN BRISTOL

The Trans Youth Support Worker travelled to Bristol to meet an 18 yr old trans man and his parents. The Trans Youth Support Worker answered some of their questions around being trans, what transition means and offered more information about the Gendered Intelligence youth group, which the young person was hoping to join. The Trans Youth Support Worker also gave them a more personal account of his transition after they asked about the effects of testosterone and the process and risks of hormone treatment. They asked a lot about the medical pathway and referral process. The young person didn't have a lot of questions himself, but made clear at the end that he was happy the Trans Youth Support Worker came and met with him and his parents.

The Trans Youth Support Worker left the 'Guide for Parents and Family Members of Trans People in the UK' for the parents, and 'A guide for young trans people in the UK' for the young person.

The Trans Youth Support Worker later had two phone conversations with this young person's future employer to make sure they were aware of his situation (as he was pre-hormone treatment and some of his documents were male, whilst others were female). They were very helpful and accommodating, describing how only certain personnel would know about the trans status of this young person and staff would be introduced to him as 'he' and by his chosen name. They also described how he would be issued with the male uniform, no questions asked. The young person was grateful not to have had to have this conversation themselves. The Trans Youth Support Worker had one further intervention for this young person, with their future university administration team. Similarly, the Trans Youth Support Worker spoke to them about the issues and informed them of their legal duties with regards to his registration at the University as male. They were very helpful and made the appropriate changes.

"I FOUND [THE TRANS YOUTH SUPPORT WORKER'S] WELCOMING MANNER AND ABILITY TO PUT US ALL AT EASE VERY HELPFUL. I ALSO LEARNED ABOUT HOW GENDERED INTELLIGENCE WORKED AND THAT THERE WOULD BE A MEETING FOR FAMILY MEMBERS IN DECEMBER, WHICH WE CERTAINLY INTEND TO COME TO. WE ARE NEW TO ALL THIS, BUT THIS HAS BEEN THE FIRST OFFER OF HELP IN A NON-PATHOLOGISING, NON-MEDICALISING WAY. I SUPPOSE WHAT I CAME AWAY THINKING WAS "WELL MAYBE THIS IS NOT SO ODD." MOTHER OF YOUNG TRANS MAN

CASE STUDY 3 – WORKING WITH A 14 YEAR OLD BOY, HIS PARENTS, SCHOOL COUNSELLOR AND HEAD OF YEAR IN HEREFORD

The Trans Youth Support Worker had email correspondence with this young person for a few months prior to any visits taking place. At this point the young person was anxious to tell his parents about his trans identity and only had had a conversation with his school counsellor. The Trans Youth Support Worker contacted his counsellor with his consent and organised a meeting at the school, with his parents, his counsellor, the head of year and the young person.

The Trans Youth Support Worker met with the counsellor for the first half an hour and the Trans Youth Support Worker answered some questions she had around the ‘trans experience’. There were also some preliminary questions about what they could do in the school to accommodate his potential transition. The Trans Youth Support Worker then met the young person for another half an hour, for an informal discussion. He told the Trans Youth Support Worker about his shorter and longer-term aims with regards to his gender identity and academic life.

The young boy’s parents and the Head of Year then joined them for about an hour and fifteen minutes, where they discussed options & practicalities at school. There was some discussion that acknowledged the mother and father’s thoughts and feelings, as well as worries and hopes for their child. The Trans Youth Support Worker also spoke a bit about his own experience of being trans. Everybody asked questions and contributed to the discussions.

The Trans Youth Support Worker left the ‘Guide for Parents and Family Members of Trans People in the UK’ for the parents, ‘A guide for young trans people in the UK’ and ‘A guide to hormone therapy for trans people’ for the young person and the ‘Parents and Family Members of Trans People in the UK A Report on the Issues’ for the workers. He also signposted the Equalities Act 2010 and the Department of Health booklets for extra reading.

CASE STUDY 4 – WORKING WITH A 24 YEAR OLD TRANS MAN, HIS MOTHER AND AUNT IN HERTFORDSHIRE.

This young person was quite clear what they needed from the outset. They were very sure about their identity and transition and had told their mum and aunt about their decision. The young trans man asked if the Trans Youth Support Worker could meet them both to help him answer some of their questions and anxieties about the future, and to talk a little about his own experiences. Due to particular circumstances, the visit was carried out in the home of the young person. The Trans Youth Support Worker arrived with a colleague. The meeting lasted around an hour and a half. A lot of the time was spent talking about the extended family, some of whom were finding it very difficult to understand and accept. There was one member of the extended family, an uncle, who was aiming to prevent the young person from seeing the young person’s nieces and nephews (the children of the uncle). During the meeting the mother became more resolute to stand by her son and to work towards increasing the understandings of other members of the family. The mother and aunt also talked about how useful it was just to meet another (older) trans man and to hear another trans ‘story’.

The Trans Youth Support Worker emailed the mother and aunt the ‘Guide for Parents and Family Members of Trans People in the UK’. The young person became a regular member

of our group.

"IT WAS USEFUL TO BE ABLE TO TALK TO SOMEONE WHO HAS GONE THROUGH THE SAME THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS AS MY CHILD AND TO BE ABLE TO ASK QUESTIONS. I LEARNT MORE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS NEXT - HORMONES, SURGERY ETC. I ALSO LEARNT MORE ABOUT THE TIMESCALE ALL THIS TAKES. BOTH STAFF MEMBERS WERE VERY FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL. I WOULD BE INTERESTED TO MEET OTHER FAMILIES WHO HAVE A TRANSGENDERED CHILD. GENDERED INTELLIGENCE IS SO IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT HAS HELPED MY SON SEE WHAT HE COULD DO AND HE IS A MUCH HAPPIER PERSON BECAUSE OF IT." MOTHER OF YOUNG TRANS MAN

CASE STUDY 5 – WORKING WITH A 15 YEAR OLD YOUNG WOMAN, AND HER PARENTS IN KENT

This young girl first came with her parents to our sports day and picnic event for young trans people and their family and friends, in the summer of 2010. It was the first time the young person had been out in public in her self-identified gender. There was some informal discussion with the parents that day, who were very warm, interested and positive around their daughter. However they did have lots of questions. The Trans Youth Support Worker has been in touch through email and phone contact with the family as they live outside of London. It was felt by the parents that the young person could not attend the youth group, for practical reasons. However the young person and the parents came to both our SOFFA events.

The Trans Youth Support Worker has supported the young person's transition in various ways, writing support letters and making enquiries with a number of organisations and services. As a young person under 16 this was at times tricky and treading on new ground as she is one of a few young people who have begun the process of hormone blockers in a programme overseen by the Charing Cross GIC and Great Ormond Street Hospital. Two things in particular that are interesting to note were her request to change her name in her passport. The Trans Youth Support Worker telephoned the Passport Services, who didn't know if they could change her details. Eventually it was confirmed that with parental consent and a doctor's letter there would be no problem. The Trans Youth Support Worker wrote a letter in support of her case. This, in conjunction with the parents' support, was sufficient and her passport was changed.

In addition there was an exploration into gamete storage (cryopreservation of sperm) as the young person wished to store her sperm prior to further medical intervention. After writing to many private clinics the parents received some positive responses and things were seemingly progressing until the chosen clinic realised their policies and insurance did not cover those under 16 years of age. The Trans Youth Support Worker referred the enquiry from this family to GIRES, who have done some campaigning work to get hormone blockers available on the NHS. They were able to speak directly to Polly Carmichael - Director of the Tavistock & Portman Clinic. They were also able to research protocol used in the United States by colleagues, where there have been similar cases.

In the end a clinic agreed to proceed, with a referral letter and assessment from the young person's doctor and a counsellor which stated "Gillick competency" with regard to her being able to understand the processes involved before consenting to sperm storage.



CASE STUDY 6 – WORKING WITH A YOUNG TRANS MAN, A PARENT AND 25 KEY WORKERS IN LONDON

A social worker contacted Gendered Intelligence for some advice and support for a young person who was an in-patient at a psychiatric hospital. Their service supported young people who are hard of hearing or deaf and have specific mental health needs. The young person had identified to the worker feelings of not being the gender they were assigned at birth (female), and was behaving “as a boy”, but was situated in a female sexed ward. The worker invited the Trans Youth Support Worker to come in to meet him and his colleagues in order to offer some information and advice around trans issues. Their questions were around how they should proceed, taking into consideration all the needs - the young person’s feelings, any diagnosis procedures, family concerns, other young people on the ward, and facilities at the hospital. At the hospital the Trans Youth Support Worker was introduced to the whole team (25 members of staff) at the department’s weekly team meeting. This clearly demonstrated a need for information and support for whole teams of key workers who are working with young people in different settings from expert organisations, such as Gendered Intelligence.

Issues that arose from the meeting were:

- The young person’s perception of himself as fully male or boy and the concern staff had around that.
- His behaviour on the ward and with other patients, particularly the female patients where he had reportedly had romantic feelings for and expressed that to them on a few occasions. Then he claimed that he did not understand why they said they were not interested in a ‘lesbian’ or ‘same sex’ relationship.
- The differences and similarities between sexual orientation and gender identity.
- How to deal with the other young people’s understandings (actual or perceived) with regards to his gender identity and behaviour, and future potential of understanding of trans issues if he wanted to begin a social transition on the ward.

The Trans Youth Support Worker also reflected on his own personal experience as a trans man around the ‘trans experience’, which the professionals seemingly valued. In addition there were some discussion around understandings of gender and it being more complex than many people think about a

At a second follow-up meeting the Trans Youth Support Worker met the young person and their mother, with two workers from the young person’s future school that the family were hoping to send the young person to. The mother had a lot of questions about trans identities, and the Trans Youth Support Worker reflected on his own journey as well as other young people’s experiences. They also discussed the risks and pro’s and con’s of transition.

The Trans Youth Support Worker left her with the ‘Guide for Parents and Family Members of Trans People in the UK’ and his contact details.

After this meeting, the Trans Youth Support Worker then talked briefly with the workers. They were interested in trans issues though hadn’t come across anyone before in their care to their knowledge.

Lastly the Trans Youth Support Worker met the young person. Two workers accompanied the meeting, mainly for communication reasons. Initially, the young person didn't have many questions and he seemed despondent. However, when the Trans Youth Support Worker disclosed his own trans status he became interested. He then had some questions, mostly around the process of medical transition, and wanted to know the details of how one can change, what surgery consisted of and the effects of hormones. The young person stated that he was satisfied with the meeting. The Trans Youth Support Worker left him the following resources: 'A guide for young trans people in the UK' and 'A guide to hormone therapy for trans people' and also emailed the social worker a copy of the Trans Youth Sexual Health Booklet.

"Finn [Trans Youth Support Worker] was very knowledgeable and able to add to my understanding of the client. I learned more about the client's transgender issues and how this might link in to our understanding of his identity problems and other current issues. I would like more support around continuing to work with this client." Psychologist therapist/ psychologist, IMPART Personality Disorder Service, North East London Mental Health NHS

CASE STUDY 7 – WORKING WITH AN 18 YEAR OLD MAN, LECTURER AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES AT HIS UNIVERSITY IN LONDON

This young person had recently started studying for a degree in Drama, Applied Theatre and Education at a University in London. He was living at home with family, but when he disclosed his trans status to his mother, he had been told to leave the house. The young person was being supported through the student support service of the University. He had a range of needs including financial crisis, housing problems as well as support around keeping up with his studies. Gendered Intelligence were sought by the team in order to think through some of the logistics of communicating the student's self-identified gender identity and new name to his peer group. A member of staff at Gendered Intelligence attended a meeting with The Head of Student Support Services to discuss the disclosure of the young person's trans status to his peers. There was a further meeting with other members of the University staff, including a course staff member to talk through the specifics of this request. Because the Gendered Intelligence worker was familiar with the university setting, it was felt that it would be appropriate for him to be present at the large meeting with the student year group when the announcement took place. The worker continued to support staff at the university through several e-mail correspondences. The university have contracted Gendered Intelligence to be part of the team at Student Support Services as a "trans mentor."

"It was useful to have an opportunity to share information and discuss the welfare of the particular student concerned and to identify the student's priorities and concerns. Before the meeting, I think it is fair to say that we were struggling. It was useful to have some re-assurance about support being offered externally and to be able to start joining this up so we were not replicating effort or offering contradictory advice either to other staff or the student themselves." Head of Student Support Services

"It's only been one day and everything has been going really well. Teachers and students are using the right pronouns and it feels amazing. Every hour I'm flooded by FB messages/texts emails and personal comments from people saying how much they respect me for this." Young trans man, student



CASE STUDY 8 – WORKING WITH A YOUNG 19 YEAR OLD TRANS WOMAN AND A CONNEXIONS WORKER IN ESSEX

The Connexions worker invited the Trans Youth Support Worker to meet a young trans woman whom she was working with. The meeting allowed both worker and young person to ask questions around trans identities. The Trans Youth Support Worker invited the young person to attend the Gendered Intelligence youth group. The young person has some specific needs and identified as being on the autistic spectrum. In addition the young person had anxieties with regards to being made homeless, as her relationship with her father was currently not supporting her gender identity and expressions. The Trans Youth Support Worker left the following resources: ‘A guide for young trans people in the UK’ and ‘A guide to hormone therapy for trans people’.

“It was useful for me as a professional working with 13-25 year olds as I had no experience of supporting a young person who was questioning their gender identity. I am now aware of the services offered by Gendered Intelligence. It was refreshing to learn more about society and gender and I see how this may isolate people who are transgender. I feel more confident in my role of supporting my client and will very much appreciate an e mail and phone support from Gendered Intelligence. Finn was extremely professional and demonstrated real skill in dealing with young people. He was patient and supportive as my client has autism and needed extra help with completing the form. In order to reduce prejudice and the isolation of trans people, it is essential that the service continue.” Intensive Personal Advisor

CASE STUDY 9 – WORKING WITH A 15 YEAR OLD YOUNG TRANS MAN, HOUSING OFFICERS & AN LGBT WORKER IN BRISTOL

The Trans Youth Support Worker communicated with two housing officers by telephone several times. Discussions centred around his trans status, age and housing difficulties. The young person was adamant that he wanted to live stealth even though hormones were to be a long way off. He was also being supported by his LGBT youth worker, who also looked to Gendered Intelligence for advice for herself and for other members of her team. The LGBT youth worker was keen to find out more with regards to legislation. The Trans Youth Support Worker left the following resources: ‘A guide for young trans people in the UK’ and ‘A guide to hormone therapy for trans people’ and also emailed the social worker a copy of the Trans Youth Sexual Health Booklet.

“I FOUND USEFUL THE SHARING OF INFORMATION AND WORK BEING UNDERTAKEN TO SUPPORT THE YOUNG PERSON.” SENIOR YOUTH & COMMUNITY WORKER, LGBT YOUNG PEOPLE’S TEAM, YOUTH & PLAY SERVICES, BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL



CASE STUDY 10 - WORKING WITH A 15 YEAR OLD YOUNG TRANS MAN AND SEVERAL KEY WORKERS INCLUDING AN LGBT SENIOR YOUTH WORKER IN WALTHAM FOREST, A PSYCHIATRIST FROM WALTHAM FOREST COMMUNITY AND MENTAL HEALTH TEAM AND A SEXUAL ABUSE CASE WORKER FROM GALOP.

The Trans Youth Support Worker attended several key worker meetings and was involved in a support plan for this young person, in order to help him identify how he wanted to move his life on. His case is very complex and includes a disruptive and unsupported home life, high support needs around learning difficulties and behavioural issues, some mental health diagnoses and a criminal record. He was also a victim of an abuse case that tied into his mental health casework. The Trans Youth Support Worker offered insight into how this young person's trans status might be inter-related with these behaviours and circumstances.

"IT FEELS GOOD TO HAVE SUPPORT OF PEOPLE WHO DO THINK ABOUT THE NEEDS OF A YOUNG PERSON IN A HOLISTIC WAY, AS WELL AS BEING REALISTIC ABOUT WHAT SERVICES CAN BE OFFERED." DEPUTY TEAM MANAGER, YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICE

