

Double Dykes Ash Project

— Final Project Report —



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Save the Children

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Smoking Cessation and Health Promotion Departments

Moira Black, Laura Miller and other health workers from Drumhar Health Centre provided health expertise for the workshops.

Freelance Community Artists

Community Arts Workers – Jo Hodges and Peter Ross supported the young people in developing their culturally specific anti-smoking DVD.

Healthy Together

Healthy Together is a project based in Argyll, with a key role in disseminating information and acting as a local link to Gypsy/Travellers in that area.

Thanks to everybody at Double Dykes Site in Perth.

The views expressed in this report are those of the project/research team and do not necessarily reflect the views of the funding body.

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1. Introduction

Save the Children is an international child rights organisation working in over 40 countries to achieve a better world for children. In Scotland we work with young Gypsy/Travellers and their families to challenge discrimination, support capacity building and promote initiatives, in a culturally sensitive way, which increase life choices and opportunities to participate in decision-making processes which affect their lives.

Gypsy/Travellers are one of the most socially excluded groups in Scotland, for young Gypsy/Travellers this isolation is further compounded by age. Our initial aim was to organise a programme of health promotion work with young Gypsy/Travellers, including smoking cessation. A dedicated programme was required to build up relationships with families and create opportunities for young people to articulate their health needs and priorities.

It is the views of young Gypsy/Travellers that prompted our application for this ASH Scotland project. Evidence of need is clear from research and fieldwork over the last two decades. Young Gypsy/Traveller's health needs are being consistently ignored and neglected. In relation to smoking status, a Sheffield University study noted '*many more Gypsy/Travellers were current smokers than age-sex-matched comparators*'. In the case of young people, smoking rates were over double that of the comparator group.

We secured a total of £14,800 from ASH Scotland and assistance in kind from Save the Children and Healthy Together equating to approximately £3,000 for the Double Dykes project which ran from May 2006 until June 2007.

The Aims and Objectives of the Double Dykes ASH Scotland project were:

- To promote health awareness in a way which is sensitive to, and respectful of, Gypsy/Traveller circumstances and culture.
- To provide information about a range of health topics including smoking, drugs, body image, mental health etc.
- To encourage participation in sports/health related activities.
- To produce culturally appropriate resources around use of tobacco.
- To promote health in a fun and participatory way.
- To build partnerships with mainstream smoking cessation services.

We hoped that this project would achieve:

- Greater awareness of personal health amongst participants.
- Increased knowledge about alternatives to tobacco.
- Improved confidence and self-esteem.
- Production of culturally specific health materials (e.g. posters, DVD).
- Improved understanding of the health needs of young Gypsy/Travellers.
- Provide opportunities for peer education work around particular themes (i.e. passive smoking).

The project was originally aimed at young Gypsy/Travellers aged between 12-18 (both sexes) living in the central belt and Argyll/Highland. There are strong family links between these areas and we have good working relations with the community and professionals in these localities. Young people living on sites, camps and in

houses were invited to attend workshops and activities, group membership was always flexible in recognition of their nomadic lifestyle.

In our application form we stated that we wished to work alongside the Healthy Together team which is a project based in Argyll, with a key role in disseminating information and acting as a local link to Gypsy/Travellers in that area. We liaised with this project with a view to working together on a joint venture within the Lochaber/Argyll area. However due to various factors, including staff recruitment/turnover, the closure of Lochaber Routes project, timescales and other project commitments, we were unable to fulfil this aspect of our project, so instead focussed on the young Gypsy/Travellers living within Perth.

Following on from the young people's planning day, we were able to set up a programme of regular day workshops and activities in partnership with the site health visitor and other local health workers. Each session was held in the on-site portocabin and was facilitated by a health worker with specific expertise. Workshops consisted of discussions and activities around a health topic, how smoking relates to each issue and participation in a sports-related activity.

Our programme of health workshops included:

- Skincare workshop (20.10.06)
- Dangers of drugs and alcohol workshop (27.10.06)
- What your doctor and dentist can do for you workshop (17.11.06)
- Try new fruits and make smoothies – workshop (24.11.06)
- Exercise session (01.12.06)
- Healthy eating workshop (08.12.06)

Each session looked at the particular health topic in detail and also explored the negative health effects that smoking can have.

From January 2007, once we had completed the healthy workshops, we started working to produce a culturally-specific anti-smoking campaign. The young people were keen to produce an anti-smoking DVD to show what they had learnt and to demonstrate the dangers of smoking. We worked with two community artists to enable the young people to script, perform and film the adverts themselves with support from workers. The young people produced a DVD containing three acted adverts, two animations and eight 'talking heads'.

3. Results

The original Aims and Objectives of the Double Dykes ASH Scotland project were:

To promote health awareness in a way which is sensitive to, and respectful of, Gypsy/Traveller circumstances and culture.

The young people were actively involved in the planning of the project, which ensured they had a strong sense of ownership and were keen to participate. As this is the first time many of the young people have been involved in workshops and activities there has been a great deal of enthusiasm from the young people and their families, however for the same reason there was also some initial apprehension from parents. We had several introductory meetings with the parents to explain more about the project and the type of activities their young people may participate in. We met parents regularly throughout the project to update them on plans and alleviate any anxieties. Some parents were particularly concerned when we had activities off-site, for example ice-skating, therefore they regularly accompanied the group at the start of the project until the trust had developed. Towards the end of the project, parents felt confident to allow their young people to come to sessions unaccompanied, for example during our exercise session at a local sports centre.

We had quite a lot of interest in some of the workshops – during the healthy eating and fruits & smoothies workshops, we had most residents from the site involved from toddlers to grandparents!

To provide information about a range of health topics including smoking, drugs, body image, mental health etc.

The young people identified health topics they wanted to explore during interactive workshops, therefore information which was provided during the programme was relevant to their needs. Topics included skincare, dangers of drugs and alcohol, accessing your doctor and dentist, fruits and smoothies, exercise sessions and healthy eating. The evaluations from these workshops are summarised on pages 8-11.

To encourage participation in sports/health related activities.

We organised fun sports activities chosen by the young people which provided opportunities for team-building within the group and with staff and linked into workshops on healthy eating and exercise, etc.

To produce culturally appropriate resources around use of tobacco.

The young people produced a DVD containing:

- ◆ **You Smoke I Croak:** Filmed inside a trailer/caravan to show the dangers of passive smoking faced by children when their parents are smoking inside their home.
- ◆ **Smoke is no Joke:** Young people choosing to have fun in a non-smoking trailer rather than sit inside a smoke-filled trailer.
- ◆ **Puffed Out:** A dance routine performed by some of the group, who are joined by a giant cigarette, but it's not long before it's 'puffed out'!
- ◆ **Kill the Habit Before it Kills You:** An animated advert with a killer cigarette!

- ◆ **Smoking Kills:** An animation showing the fire dangers of smoking inside a trailer/ caravan.
- ◆ **Talking Heads:** Eight animated 'talking heads' each with a different warning about the dangers and affects of smoking.

To promote health in a fun and participatory way.

The young people were involved in all aspects of their project as they designed their own programme to suit their learning needs. Each workshop was facilitated by a different health professional with specific expertise and they all endeavoured to make the sessions as interactive as possible for the participants.

To build partnerships with mainstream smoking cessation services.

There was already a trusted health visitor established on site and it was a significant advantage to work in partnership with her on this project, she also has strong contacts within the local health centre and she has involved many of these contacts within different sessions. The parents all had contact with her and so were happy for their young people to be involved in the project. It has also been positive for the health visitor as she now has contact with the young people on site whom she previously did not see.

The DVD was of great quality and the young people were very keen to show others their work, so we decided to organise a screening event for friends, family and relevant workers to view their adverts. The young people were involved in all stages of planning the evening event, including date and time, invitation list, designing invitations, choosing the venue, format of the day, speeches and buffet food.

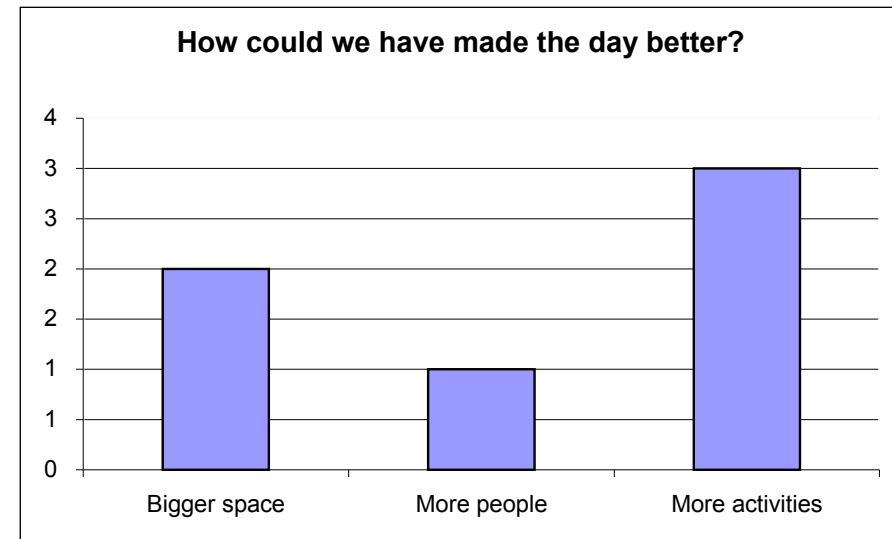
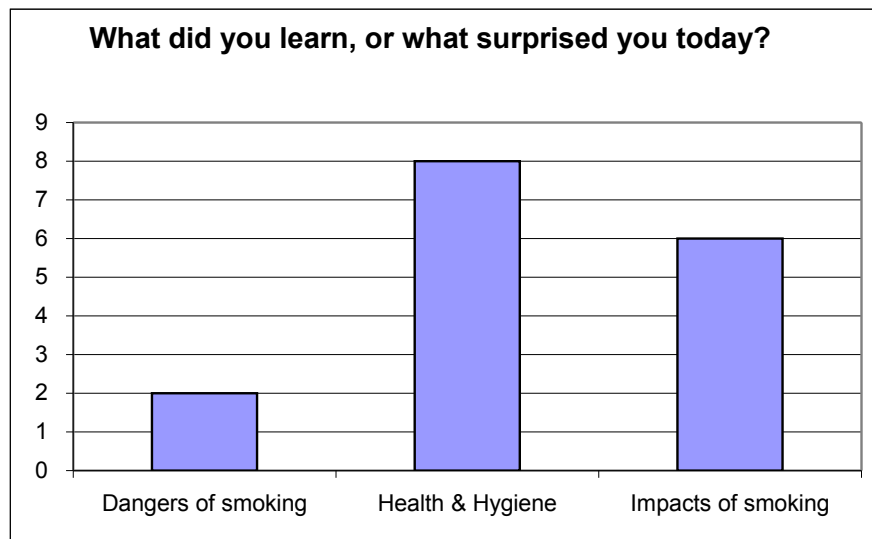
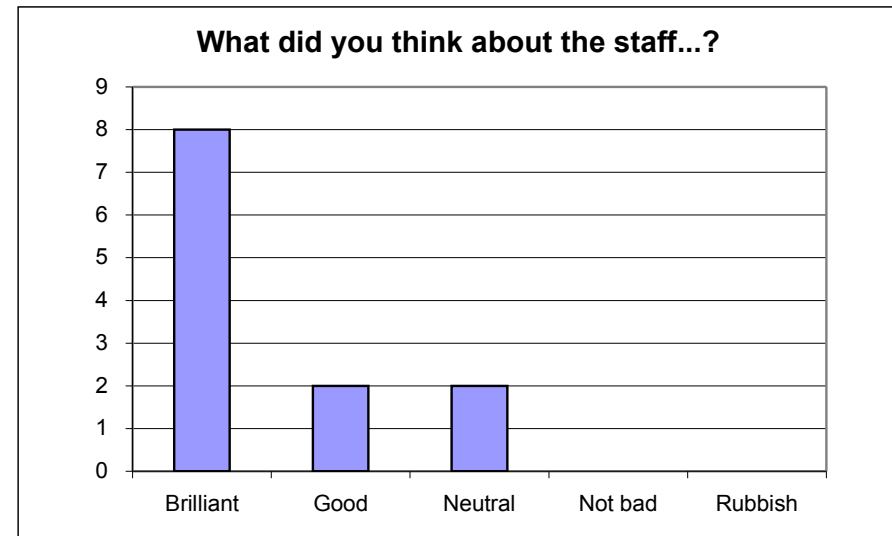
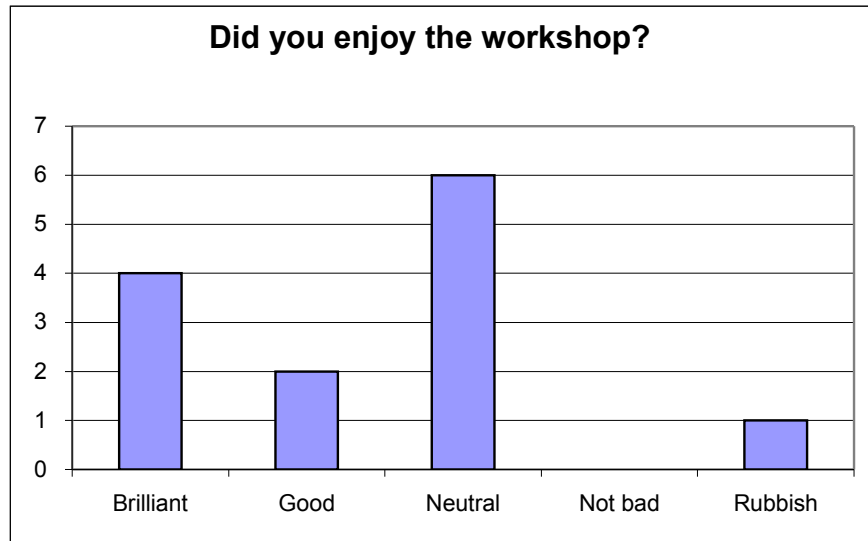
The event was held on 29th June 2007 at AK Bell Library in Perth. The young people introduced their project, explained the work they had been doing and why it was important to them, the audience were then able to watch the adverts on the cinema screen. The event was completed by a buffet and a chance for the guests to meet and chat with the young people from the project. The young people really enjoyed the evening and the chance to 'show-off' their work.

For the Lochaber/Argyll section of the project we linked with another ASH Scotland funded worker employed by Lochaber Routes and we established several contacts in the area to work together in setting up a programme.

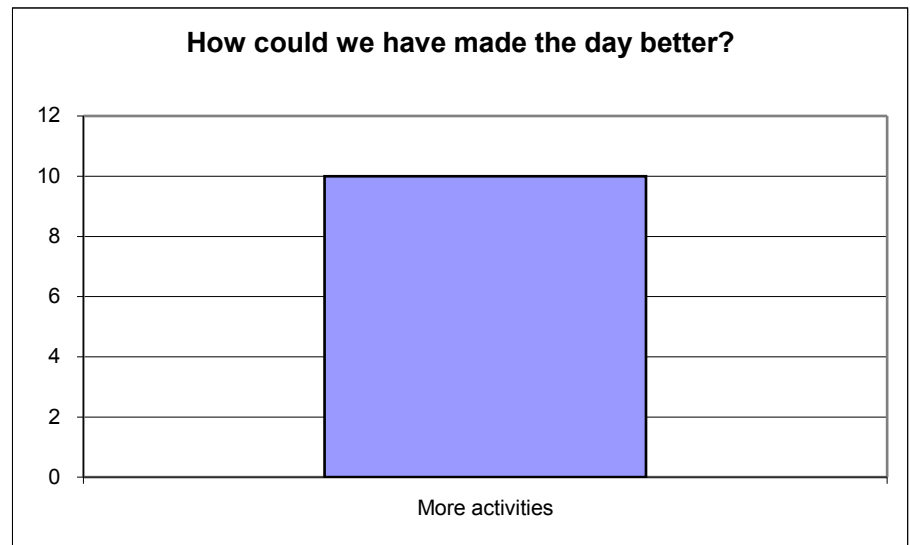
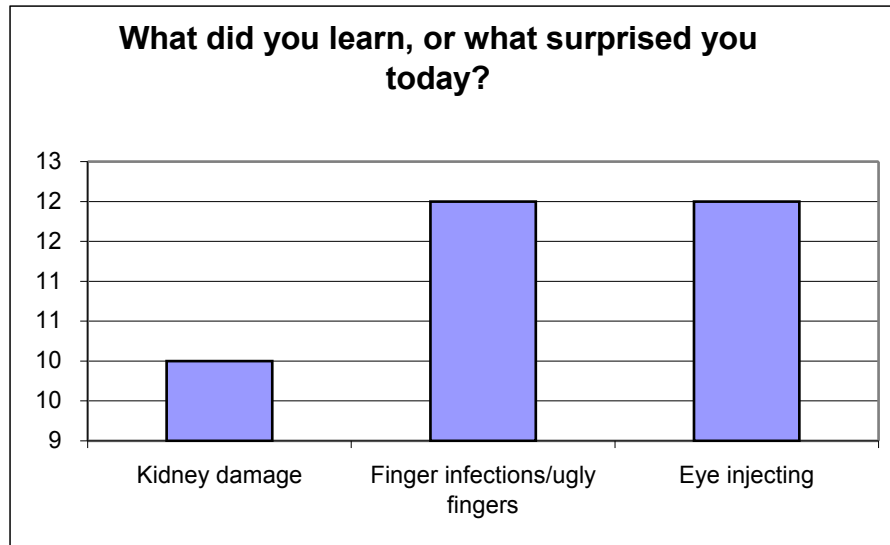
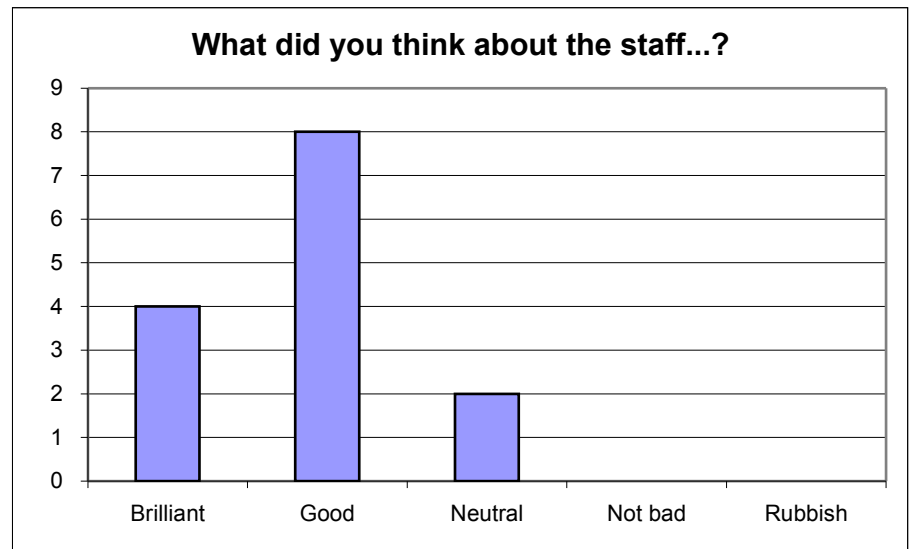
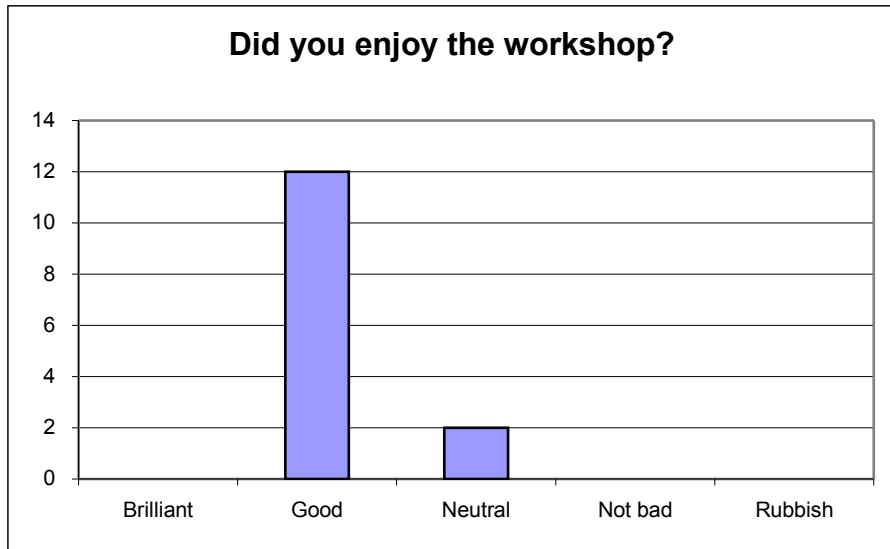
We met with a Smoking Cessation nurse in Oban and used this as an opportunity to raise awareness of issues faced by young Gypsy/Travellers in the area.

We also participated in meetings and a 'Gypsy/Traveller Health Day' with Lochaber Routes and Healthy Together projects, where we highlighted the needs of young Gypsy/Travellers which otherwise would not have been presented.

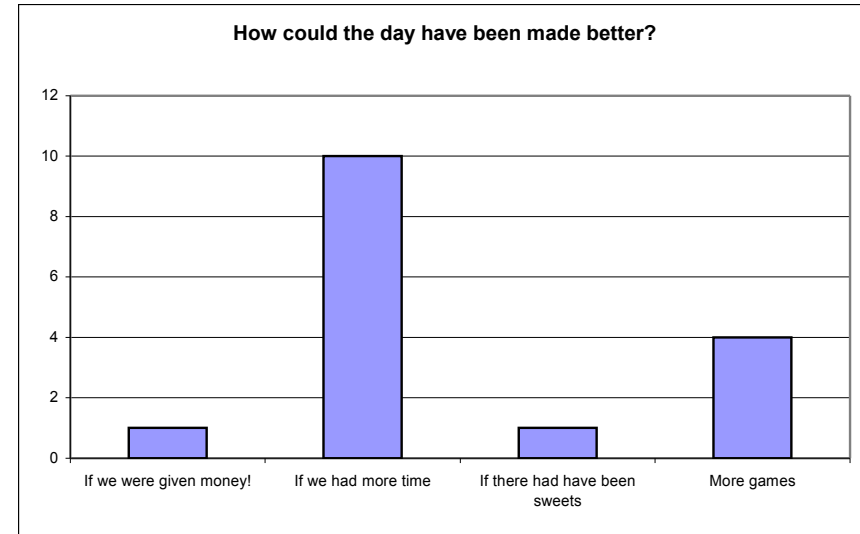
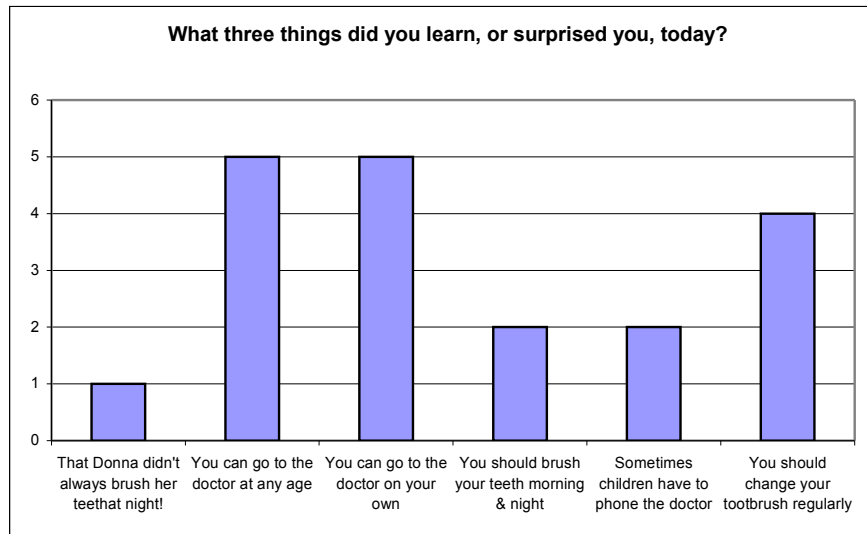
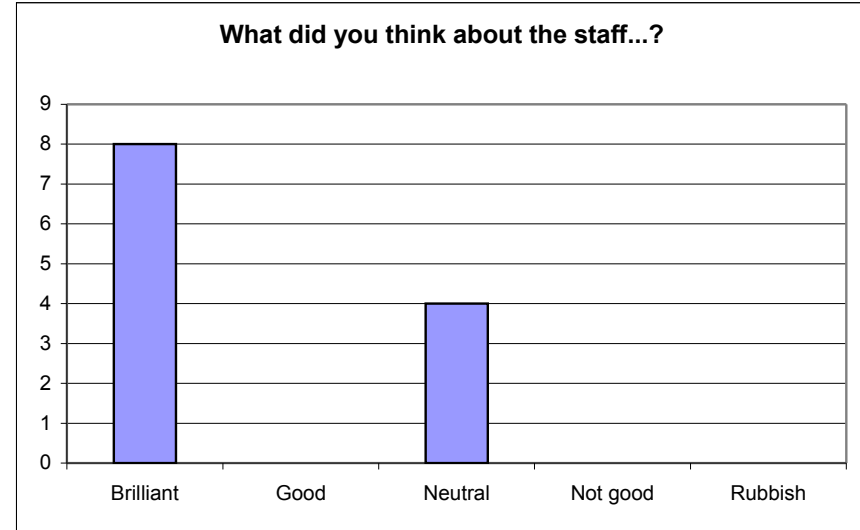
SKINCARE WORKSHOP



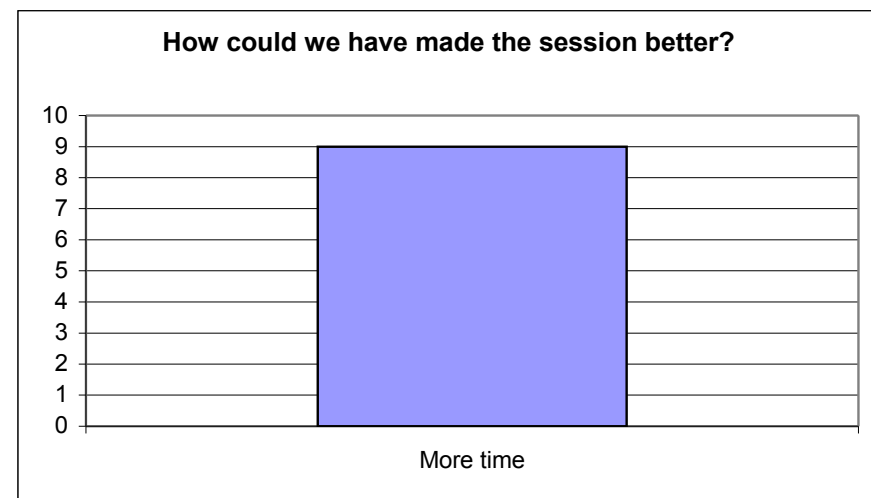
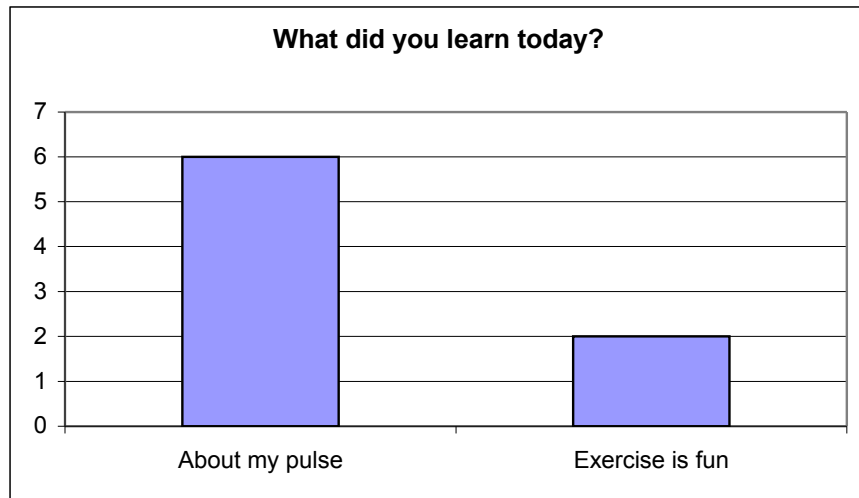
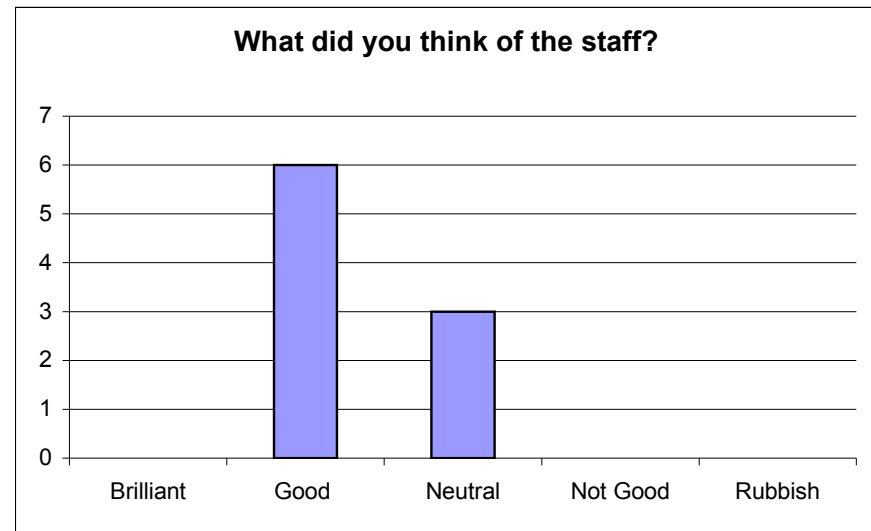
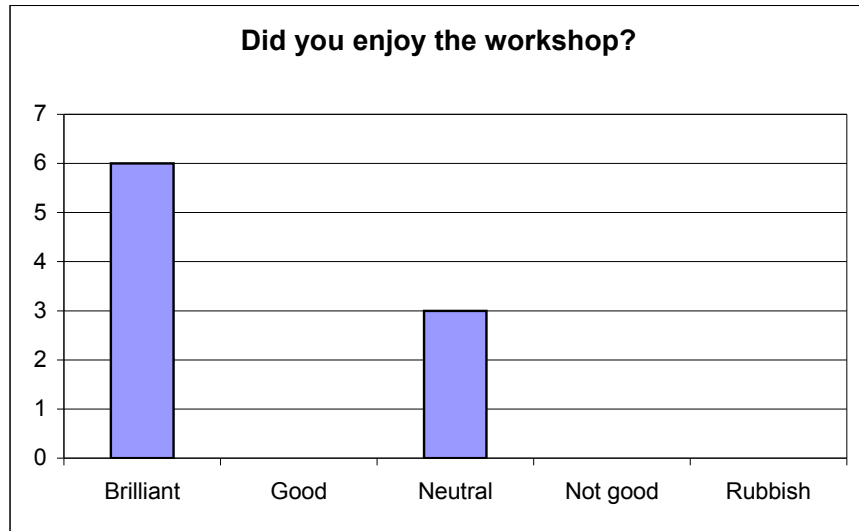
DANGERS OF DRUGS AND ALCOHOL WORKSHOP



WHAT YOUR DOCTOR AND DENTIST CAN DO FOR YOU!



EXERCISE SESSION



4. Conclusion

The project has met the aims it set out to achieve; it has shown the benefits of a targeted approach but has also highlighted the wider health needs and a definite need for further work.

There is a much greater awareness of personal health issues amongst participants and an increased knowledge about the dangers and affects of tobacco. The culturally specific DVD, which was created, will be a useful resource to promote improved understanding of the health needs of the Gypsy/Traveller community and can also be used with other young people.

The young people are significantly more confident since starting with the project, for example some of the group have expressed interest in joining other groups within Save the Children, something they have not previously been engaged with.

The success of the project was greatly aided by the site health visitor who was able to provide a valuable link into the local health centre and various workers. As she was already working on-site with the older Gypsy/Travellers she had some contacts, however through the project she has established contact with the young people in her area.

We have formed many new relationships within Perth & Kinross, with families, young people and workers and have increased awareness of some of the health issues faced by Gypsy/Travellers. We have also facilitated two Gypsy/Traveller awareness-raising sessions in 2007 with Perth & Kinross Council and have recently received an order for another two sessions later this year.

There are lessons that can be learnt from the Lochaber/Argyll project slipping from our planned programme. Some of these issues were outwith our control, such as Lochaber Routes project closing. However perhaps the amount of work associated with co-ordinating workers and arranging suitable dates was underestimated, especially considering the short timescale and unrealistic resources to do such work at a distance.

5. Recommendations for Future Work or Research

This project has been a useful pilot study to inform future work with marginalised young people. This model could be replicated in other areas and used with other excluded groups to lobby for their needs to be incorporated into core services and/or to support the need for long-term investment.

We have had discussions with the young people regarding involvement with future work with Save the Children, something which was not considered before contact was established through this ASH Scotland project. We have also discussed with health workers further work that can be carried out with the group and other young Gypsy/Travellers in the area, and the drugs-awareness worker who runs sessions on-site has expressed an interest in adopting our model.

Perth & Kinross Council, who manage the Double Dykes site, made a request for awareness-raising training for their workers. We have so far supported Gypsy/Travellers from the site to facilitate two sessions with council staff, with a further two sessions planned for November 2007 and February 2008.

This project has shown significant benefits of working in a targeted way. However this needs to be followed up by mainstream providers and further work by ASH Scotland to target this excluded group.

6. Dissemination

The DVD resource produced by the young people will be disseminated widely throughout the UK through conferences, Traveller Times magazine, various young people's magazines, newspapers, mail shot to sites, etc, thereby ensuring a lasting legacy. It is also important for this work to be promoted to other groups of young people.

Already we have had media coverage including The Scotsman, The Big Issue and Youthlink's Newsletter – The Link.

'Kill the habit before it kills you!' says the younger generation of gypsy travellers in Scotland. Funded by ASH Scotland and supported by Save the Children, the youngsters have created an anti-smoking campaign, warning other young people in their community against the habit. The campaign includes adverts, all scripted, performed and filmed by the young people themselves. Donna Lawrie, youth development worker for Save the Children said, "the young people have worked so hard and the ads are really creative, we hope they will make a huge difference."
www.savethechildren.org.uk

NEWS

● YOUNG Gypsies and Travellers have produced a series of anti-smoking advertisements aimed at encouraging other young people in their Perth community to "kill the habit before it kills you". The Tobacco and Inequalities Project, which is funded by ASH Scotland and supported by Save the Children, includes three acted adverts, two animated adverts and eight "talking heads" – all scripted, performed and filmed by young Gypsies and Travellers. Health organisations will have access to the material and Save the Children plans to use the adverts as a resource for its ongoing work with young Gypsies and Travellers in Scotland.

The Big Issue in Scotland
19/07/2007

The Scotsman
31/07/2007

YOUNG GYPSY/TRAVELLERS ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY TO KICK HABIT

Images, interviews and copies of the DVD available

Young Gypsy/Travellers have produced a series of anti-smoking adverts aimed at encouraging other young people in their community to "kill the habit before it kills you".

The ASH Scotland-funded 'Tobacco and Inequalities' project is supported by Save the Children and includes three acted adverts, two animated adverts and eight 'talking heads' – all scripted, performed and filmed by the young Gypsy/Travellers themselves.

Health organisations will have access to the material and Save the Children plan to use the adverts as a resource for their ongoing work with young Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland.

Donna Lawrie, Youth Development worker for Save the Children in Scotland, said:

"We worked jointly with health workers to support the young people to explore health issues that were important to them. Smoking had a big impact on all the issues they identified, so the young people decided they wanted to produce culturally-specific, anti-smoking materials to persuade others to give up, or not take up, a smoking

habit. The young people have worked so hard and the adverts are really creative, we hope they will make a huge difference".

Commenting Maureen Moore OBE, Chief Executive of ASH Scotland, said:

"This is a great initiative which will target a group of young people that can often be missed by mainstream education and cessation projects. The materials were produced by young Gypsy/Travellers and are aimed directly at their peers so I am sure they will be effective. Scotland has the highest rate of young smokers in Britain so we must do all we can to help reduce smoking rates and protect the health of our future generations. This means finding imaginative ways of reaching teenagers to stop them taking up smoking and to help those who have started to quit. I hope this unique project will do just that".

For more information, including copies of the DVD, please contact: Beverley Kirk, Media Officer (Scotland), Save the Children. Tel: 0131 527 8244/07764 560 940. Email: b.kirk@savethechildren.org.uk

The Link August 2007

Some of the young people were also interviewed by Jake Bowers for Rokker Radio which is a programme focusing on issues affecting the whole of the Travelling community and provides an opportunity to talk about subjects which are rarely aired outside the community.

Requests for copies of the DVD have been received from academics and community and health workers, we expect there to be further requests as news of this resource extends.