



Training Opportunities for workers working with Boys and Young Men in Gloucestershire

It seems incredible that almost three years have passed since we sat down to explore the possibility of developing a professional network for workers who work with and for boys and young men in Gloucestershire. Equally incredible is the success of the Network and the work it has produced, the support it has given to workers and the training opportunities it has provided.

During our short time together the Network has planned and facilitated five workshops, which have included work around masculinity, mental health and emotional well-being and workshops which provide practical ideas for actually 'doing' the work with boys and young men. GBYMN has also facilitated a practical workshop for the LEA, providing teachers with ideas for PSHE work with young men within a schools setting. We hope that some, if not all of these workshops have given us food for thought and some useful ideas for our work with boys and young men.

It has always been our intention for the Network to be a support, not only for workers who work with or manage work with boys and young men, but that also addresses the many different needs of the boys and young men residing in Gloucestershire. I hope you agree our training workshops have gone some way to meeting both of these ambitions.

To maintain momentum, our thoughts are turning towards our training programme for 2004/05. We have identified two important areas to explore

- Working with young men who use/misuse drugs and alcohol
 - Working with black young men
- Initially we had planned to facilitate a workshop around work with black young men in April, however, the planning group thought it will be more appropriate if we provide this opportunity during 'black history month' in October and make it a full day of celebrations and education – so, into the breach stepped Sue Ellis who at very short notice has taken the lead in organising our April workshop which will be around working with boys and young men who use/misuse drugs. So we hope to see as many of you at Chequers Bridge on the 23rd April that have attended previous workshops.

Another 'type' of training opportunity, which GBYMN is developing and delivering, are 'community based' events. One such event, a men's health night will be held at the ODDFELLOWS ARMS in Cirencester on Wednesday 12th May when comedian and TV presenter NICK PAGE will compare a pub quiz and games evening, making use of material from the forthcoming 'Pies, Pints and Prostates' resource pack. So, if you are in the Cirencester area and want to call in for an educative but fun night we will be delighted to see you!! A similar event planned for Men's Health week in June, will be facilitated by well known Gloucestershire GP and TV and radio presenter Dr Mark Porter.

The Network is also currently working on the delivery of a 'training pack' which we hope to take into the six geographical areas of the

Newsletter number 4 sees the Network looking back on a year of achievement and building for the future. This issue contains details of the development of 'Know your Kit?', work with dads, including 'Baby Fathers' and the development of a Dads in Gloucestershire group. We also take a look at some of the successful partnership working the Network has been involved in.

In 2003 the Network produced a Position Statement on the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention in England. A summary of recommendations from this features in this issue as well as a personal perspective on young men and self-harm.

Further workshops are planned and the Network will be offering training on issues for boy and young men around the county later in 2004. As ever, if you want to find out more, or if you are working with boys and young men around health and social issues, please do let us know.

Paul Hopkins and Bernie Cox

county – the pack will be a resource for workers, but will be aimed at informal educative work with young men in a variety of settings. The pack will include training on the Network's 'Know your Kit?' sex and relationships resource. If anyone wants to contribute to this, or indeed to any of our training events (or if you have a particular area of work you want to explore). Please do not hesitate to contact Paul or myself – we will be delighted to hear from you!!

Bernie Cox

A Family Learning Weekend Event at the Trust Centre for Dads and Kids

As part of Family Learning Weekend in October 2003, the Dads group at Sure Star Gloucester held a 'Dads and Kids event'. Ismail Ginwalla describes the build-up and subsequent happenings.

The Sure Start Dads and Kids group has been running since February of 2003. As a celebration we decided to put on a special event for Family Learning Weekend. Our aim was for dads and their children to come along and enjoy an informative and entertaining session at the Sure Start centre in The Trust Centre, Conduit Street, Gloucester, where dads and children could relax and enjoy themselves.

Planning and organisation for this event took quite some time. Colleagues from Sure Start had made the preparations well in advance and two walls were covered in large sheets of white paper, so graffiti with paints, can be applied by the children and their dads. A musician Craig Trafford, who specialises in working with children had been booked to make simple instruments and provide music and story telling. The event

was videoed by Andy Harris, Baby Fathers Project Worker.

In keeping with the relaxed atmosphere of the Dads and Kids Saturday morning sessions, it was important that the day was very informal. No one is forced to do something

that they don't want to do! On the morning of the day everyone stood to attention to welcome the participants. The event was due to commence at 12.00 pm and by 11.30 am the first dad accompanied by his children arrived at the door. Excitedly we let them in and without any stage-managing they slotted themselves in and headed towards the covered walls and the paint.

By 12.00 pm the venue had filled up as more and more dads with their children started arriving. Shouts of joy and laughter filled the place with no one having to steer anyone to a particular activity. The walls became a sea of colour with expressions of faces, splashes, handprints and anything and



Substance Use and Boys and Young Men

The Government's 10 year strategy for tackling drug misuse: Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain was published in April 1998. It gave four key objectives – young people, communities, treatment and availability.

Young People's aim – "To help young people resist drug misuse in order to achieve their full potential in society"

The Updated Drug Strategy launched in December 2002 states that "the most effective way of reducing the harm drugs cause is to persuade all potential users, particularly the young, not to use drugs" and the Government will

be targeting action on the most dangerous drugs and the most vulnerable young people.

What is meant by Vulnerable Young People?

- Young offenders
- Looked after children
- Young homeless
- Children whose parents misuse drugs
- Young people who truant or are excluded from school
- Young People involved in prostitution

Research conducted by the Home Office indicates that boys and young men feature as the majority in all these categories

except prostitution, although evidence shows this to be on the increase. Males were more likely to have reported using an illicit drug in the last year and that is true for all types of drug.

Young men may be difficult to engage, require more active methods of learning and find accessing support for their emotional well-being a problem.

The Network hopes to raise awareness and offer some approaches to these issues by holding a workshop at Chequers Bridge Youth Centre, Gloucester on 23rd April.

Sue Ellis

everything which children do when given a paintbrush and plain paper.

Craig commenced his music session by slowly introducing rhythms and this then brought the children and their dads to sit around him. Once he had their attention he did his bit explaining the principles of what he was doing and what they would be doing. Craig demonstrated to the fascinated children (and dads!) the importance of listening and watching, and how each element of our facial organs functioned. He also talked about fathers and fatherhood, and how important fathers are to their children.

Andy Harris was busy filming the event, and produced a personal video account of the day to be given to each dad to take away as a memento of the event.

Health Promotion also had a useful display and information stand which included work done by Andy Harris for the 'Baby Fathers' project, and leaflets and booklets for dads to take away, which ranged from subjects on health and benefits to being a father.

The event went very well and by the time we closed the doors at the end of the session fifteen to twenty dads and more than twenty children had accessed the centre and taken part in what was a hard to reach group. If you would like to find out more about the Sure Start Gloucester Dads and Kids group, or if you're a dad and want to take part, please contact the Trust Centre on (01452) 544043.

Ismail Ginwalla, Sure Start Development Worker



Dads in Gloucestershire (DiG)

Dads in Gloucestershire (DiG) is the name given to a new group exploring work with dads in the county. The common theme is the word 'Dad' – meaning that the group is open to exploration of work with dads of all ages and in all fields of work – whether this is looking at post-natal depression in new fathers or

setting up a young dads group. The next meeting of the Dads in Gloucestershire group is March 29th at Gardeners Lane Early Years Centre in Cheltenham. For further information on DiG contact Paul Hopkins on 01452 429343 or Ann Wheeler (Playgroup And Toddler Association) on 01452 540272.

Dads@Gardners Lane Early Years Centre

Gardners Lane Early Years Centre is a well-established family centre based in Cheltenham. It has been working with families in the local vicinity for approximately 20 years. Historically a large focus of the work that has taken place has predominantly been with mothers. Although fathers have used the centre they have been far and few between. For many men the thought of using the centre can be quite a daunting and intimidating experience.

Others feel it is a place for mother's to go with their children and not a place for them to spend time with their children or seek support. Involving fathers in the centre is an area that we are aware we have not been pro-active in and one that we need to improve upon.

Staff at the centre fully recognise the important role that father's / male carers play in the lives of their children. We want to promote and encourage positive relationships between fathers and children and enable them to recognise the importance and value they have in their children's lives. To help achieve this in the summer of 2003 a fathers group was formed. Initially numbers were low with only 2-3 dads attending with their children. Gradually the numbers of father's attending began to increase and now approximately 10

dads, with their children, use the group on a regular basis.

It runs once a month on a Saturday and either mini bus trips are arranged to local attractions such as the Forest of Dean or the centre is opened and various play facilities and snacks are provided. Two members of staff help to run the group and are there to offer support and advice if it is needed. The group is very informal, with the main aim being that children are spending quality, fun time with their dads.

The group is still in its early stages of development, but is something that we hope will continue to grow and be successful. In the future we aim to organise workshops for fathers on issues such as men's health, parenting support and managing relationships.

The group is open to all father's (that includes dads, step-dads, grandfathers, uncles) and their children (under 10 years). Anyone can attend and you do not have to live in the surrounding area. Although mini bus trips are restricted to numbers, but people are more than welcome to meet us if they have their own transport. If you would like more details on the group, please contact Julie Clifton on 01242 252185.

Julie Clifton

Young Men, Self-harm And Suicide: A Gloucestershire Perspective

'Reality Bites'

It's hard to keep my head together,
Through days of pain and stormy weather,
It's hard for me to up and leave,
When I am angry it's hard to breath,
When I am sad, angry or worn,
I turn to violence when I should mourn,
That's why my mental health is through,
And I do aerosol and glue,
When I'm depressed I turn to drugs,
To fit in with all the other thugs,
It's hard to smile or be nice,
When happiness comes at a price,
The pills I take are like a knife,
'Cause every one could take your life,
But still I wonder what to do,
Perhaps with help I'll make it through.

Entry to World Mental Health Day 2003 Poetry Writing Initiative

Every suicide matters, every one is preventable

Suicide is the commonest cause of death in men aged under 35 in England.

The suicide rates for men aged 15-24 have doubled since 1971 and almost doubled for men aged 25-44.

Of the 309 people who committed suicide in Gloucestershire between 1992 and 2002, 238 were men. In 2001, 50 people committed suicide in Gloucestershire. Of these, 41 were men, 13 of whom were aged between 15 and 34. Every one of these deaths is a tragedy. The impact of these deaths on family,

friends, communities and carers is enormous.

National context informs local action?

"Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation" (1999) set a target to reduce the death rate from suicide and undetermined injury by at least 1/5th by 2010.

In September 2002, The National Suicide Prevention Strategy for England was published. This set out programmes of activity based on 6 goals to meet this target.

The Gloucestershire Boys and Young Men Network have produced a Position Statement on The National Strategy for

Suicide Prevention in England. The Statement is intended to catalyse and support community responses to suicide within Gloucestershire and its' localities. The recommendations set out in the statement represent the collective views of members.

Recommendations: The engines for change and the fuel to power them

A dual strategic approach is required where

- Agencies target and develop methods that enable young men to use their services
- Young men are provided with settings where they can broaden their coping strategies and attitudes towards gender and be encouraged to seek help

The Position Statement makes clear and detailed recommendations about future strategic direction and service provision within Gloucestershire.

The engines for change-Primary Care Trusts and Local Strategic Partnerships:

A co-ordinated local strategic response to the National Strategy needs to produced. Work to prevent suicide and promote the mental well-being of boys and young men in Gloucestershire should be led through a combination of the work programmes of the Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and the three Primary Care Trusts (PCTS).

The fuel in the engine: Building....

- Service delivery in community venues
- Culture-based initiatives
- A mental health and well-being practitioner skills development course
- The mental health promoting role of school nurses
- The mental health promoting potential of our schools
- Professional development opportunities to enhance the skills of people who work with boys & young men. Programmes

should focus on vulnerable groups such as gay and bisexual men, refugees, those involved in the criminal justice system

- Choice in primary care
- Bridges with our media

The fuel in the engine:
Communication

Organisations and partnerships must:

- Take responsibility for any inability to target & engage with young men effectively. Little significant development will take place if we project the problem onto their reluctance to use

services

- Adopt approaches that highlight emotional fitness and mental strength within a positive and non-stigmatising framework
- Design messages to target quite specific groups of young men. Messages such as “It is good to talk” are only likely to impact on young men who have experienced this to be the case.
- Develop resources for boys and young men that promote mental health, self-esteem and assertiveness thus contributing to suicide prevention.

- Develop resources for boys and young men that promote access to support and advice services.
- Ensure availability of these messages and resources in places where young men can access them.

Copies of the Statement are available from the Network’s website www.gbymn.org.uk or from Jeremy Voaden, Mental Health Promotion Coordinator
Tel: 01452-383255 / e-mail: Jeremy.voaden@glospart.nhs.uk

Jeremy Voaden

Self- Harm; a ‘Girlie’ Thing?

Vicky MacDougall is Mental Health Project Manager for Gloucestershire Partnership Trust. Her work brings her into contact with young men who self-harm. The article looks at one young man’s experience of self-harm and how to seek help.

I’ve read lots of stuff on girls hurting themselves you know like on Hollyoaks but I have self-harmed since I was 7 years old and I’m a boy. My mum drank the whole time and dad left home. Mum then remarried someone else and I had two half brothers – they were horrible. I didn’t feel I belonged anymore or anywhere and nobody wanted me. I got very angry as no one asked me what was wrong and I then got secluded from school.

Hurting myself made me feel better. It was a secret that nobody knew. I could use a razor or anything sharp you know like a glass or a can, it wasn’t always clean and I didn’t look after myself. I felt I wasn’t worth it, that came later. I didn’t want to tell anybody I thought they would think I was completely mad. They’d say that’s what girls do to get attention. I didn’t want attention. I just wanted to feel better. It made my mind feel clearer. I was sure I was the only

one in the world that did this.

If things got too bad and I got very angry or sad I’d cut myself or hit my fist on the wall. It used to give me a break. I felt better the minute I started to do it or when I first made my mind up that I was going to.

I never wanted to kill myself.

Then by mistake when I was older I’d drunk too much, had a row with my girlfriend and took too many pills, cut myself very deeply and ended up in accident and emergency. I was very scared and also very, very sick in front of my girlfriend – how embarrassing was that! They stitched me up and saw all the other old scars but were really nice and told me it happens to lots of boys and girls. I wasn’t allowed to go home and my mum wasn’t around to help me – I really wanted her. They put me on a ward with lots of old men and women and wanted me to talk to a man about what had happened. My girlfriend said I should and that I needed help. I didn’t want to stop self-harming and thought that the man would make me. It wasn’t like that at all though he told me all about how I could self-harm safely using clean things to cut myself with and using bandages afterwards, he

also gave me a number of websites that I could use and some phone numbers.

This was the first time I felt I’d got any help at all or even felt I could talk about it without feeling too scared and ashamed. He also said that he’d help me look at the other things that were going wrong in my life like money, somewhere to live and ways of looking at why I was hurting myself. My girlfriend was brilliant and I’m living with her parents just now until I get myself fixed up with something else.

I’ve now started to look at other things to do instead of hurting myself I go kickboxing and phone other people when I’m feeling unhappy. I also use my computer to contact other people who feel the same. I know I’ve got a long way to go before I stop altogether but I know I want to.

The web sites I’ve used most are:

The Young People and Self-harm website www.ncb.org.uk/selfharm
Self-harm alliance
www.selfharmalliance.org.uk

Article supplied by Vicky MacDougall

Baby Fathers – Update

What has become known as the 'Baby Fathers' project, a project that encompasses not only work in Gloucestershire, but also across the south west region, has been underway for almost a year. The project, supported by Government Office South West, aims to promote positive images of young fathers and allow young fathers the opportunity to express how they feel about being a young dad through the medium of the arts – whether by video work, photography, literature or music. The project will culminate in a celebration and exhibition of the work produced

across the south west in June, with county exhibitions to follow.

The Gloucestershire Boys and Young Men Network have taken on the project for the county, working through organisations that are working with young dads, or are exploring work with young dads. Whilst the work can be rewarding, it can also be difficult to engage young dads; a situation voiced by all the workers on the project across the south west. In two reports GBYMN members describe their attempts at engaging young dads. Becky How, Community Involvement worker at

Brockworth Community Project talks about her work starting a young dads group and the difficulties she has encountered. Lloyd Williams is a Support Worker for Gloucester Youth Housing Association. He has contributed to the Baby Fathers project through his face-to-face work with young men. Lloyd describes his work with young men receiving support through GYHA and provides the transcript of an interview with Steve, a young father, giving a perspective on the support he has been given.

Working with Young Dads in Brockworth

“Over the last few months I have tried to work with Young Dads in the Brockworth area; it has proved difficult to get them involved. I have tried many times to get them all together, and arrange activities, but for some reason they are just not motivated enough to attend anything organised for them. I can speak to two or three of them and they can seem really keen, but when it gets to actually getting an activity organised, they don't show.

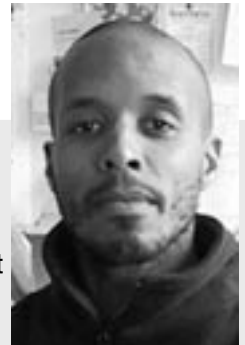
“For example a trip was organised to go to watch Gloucester Rugby Club

play. They all said that they would come, they were given dates and times and they all promised to be there, but on the day it was a 'no-show'. So I went back to them and asked why? I was given a number of different reasons for why they didn't turn up. One of the reasons that they gave, that I didn't expect, was that they were having trouble with childcare. I have come across this problem with our young mums, but didn't expect this with the young dads; it's easy to assume that the mums would be there to look after the children.

“I'm just going to keep on trying, because I know that they are keen to do things. If we can sort out some of the problems that they are having, for example provide childcare and arrange the days and times of activities around them, and we can keep on offering attractive activities, I will be eventually able to get them in, and then the work can start.”

Becky How

Please call Becky on (01452) 863896 for further information



Lloyd Williams

Gloucester Youth Housing Association

Lloyd Williams :A worker's perspective

“I've been a support worker for Gloucester Youth Housing Association for the last 11 months. As a member of the 'floating support team', I support young people between the ages of 16 and 25 to live independently in the community. The support requirements vary from one person to the next; one common factor that is frequently raised with the young men I work with, is employment, or the lack of it. This obviously has an impact on their lives – how they feel about themselves, and how this impacts on others.

“GYHA has set up a young men's group to talk about issues that affect the lives of the men we are working with – whether that's about unemployment, parenting issues or health. Being a support worker has been very rewarding for me as I take

great satisfaction in helping people to become empowered and lead more fulfilling lives. It's so easy in today's society to write off the younger generation and young men. Given support they will look forward to a much brighter future than if they had been left to struggle on alone. That's what I want to achieve in my role.

“As a member of the Boys and Young Men Network, I've been able to support projects, like 'Baby Fathers', through my day-to-day work in close contact with the young dads I work with. Working together we can achieve more than if we were just doing things in our individual organisations. It helps to have that support.”

Steve: A young fathers perspective

“I'm 19 years old, with a daughter who's one. I see my daughter as much as I can, although I don't live

with her and her mum. I've been receiving support from GYHA now for about 8 months. My support worker

has been great, not just helping me with little things, like getting me donated furniture and kitchen appliances, but also with the bigger things in my life – like getting a job.

“Seriously, I don't know where I'd be without him – probably still on the dole. He not only went out of his way to find me a job, but he even came to the interview with me and sorted out my benefits when I started work. He gets on with my daughter and girlfriend, when for whatever reason I go to meet him where they live instead of my place. The good thing about having support from GYHA is that he's more like friend than a support worker.”

WRAP – a tool for our recovery journeys

Recovery and Mental Distress

Recovery? Something to do with stolen cars, debt, that Sunday morning bleary-eyed feeling... ..mental distress?

In the field of mental health, recovery involves a process of shifting orientation and behaviour from a focus on a troubling experience such as mental distress towards the restoring, rebuilding, reclaiming and taking control of one's life in a way that makes sense of, and integrates elements and learning taken from the experience. So it is not about a return to how someone was before. It is about building on the past to identify and make progress towards new aspirations.

Recovery is not what services do to or for people. Rather, recovery is what people experience themselves as they become empowered to manage their mental distress and/or substance misuse in a manner that allows them to achieve a meaningful life and a positive sense of belonging in their community.

This article argues that use of Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) is a tool with gender-specific advantages for young men who experience mental distress on their recovery journeys.

The “Cling-Hard Trio”

Journeys towards recoveries are all unique. The disruption to life resulting from mental distress impacts upon understandings of the past, the practicalities of the present and prospects for the future. Countless personal dimensions yielding countless opportunities for recovery – but the three monkeys, “hopeless”, “hapless” and “helpless” cling hard on the back.

Gendering the monkeys - Hopeless, hapless and helpless?

For boys and young men, four major themes emerge from consideration of the research on this trio.

i. Emotions: Young men show distinct gender-specific attitudes to vulnerability, control (and lack of it) and identity.

ii. Stereotypical Views: Young men maintain entrenched and stereotypical views on men, women, coping with and resilience to stress and help seeking.

iii. Coping Strategies: Exploration of emotions and distress yield fixed negative responses. Exploration of “coping” yields a broad range of methods. Coping behaviour is something viewed as desirable. This range commonly includes

- “Soldier on” and “keep it to yourself”.
- Some young men speak with friends that won't “take the piss”.
- Starting with the intention of sharing with a friend but ending up dealing with it on your own as don't know how to talk about it.
- Things which help you to forget, relax and “keep on top of the situation” including alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco and sleep.
- Taking it out on others e.g. Using violence.

iv. Talking Therapies: Talking is a coping strategy held in very low regard because there is no belief that it will relieve stress or change anything. However, those who try talking about problems value this approach. Young men are often reluctant to discuss problems but find it easier to engage with a solution-based approach.

Towards turning points.....

First glimpses of recovery are often barely perceptible. Men talk about “an undertow gathering strength before the tide turns” and “a fundamental change when I was at rock bottom and had to make a choice”. Research identifies key themes that enabled people to move from these glimpses into their recovery journeys. These turning points” are, in order of significance

- Taking charge (of my distress, my recovery or my life)
- Interventions from others
- Insight and self-acceptance
- A spiritual awakening and spiritual beliefs

- A “rude awakening”
- Deciding to live
- A sudden shift in identity and understanding of who I am and can be

That's WRAP, not WARP!

The use of a Wellness Recovery Action Plan, known to those who use them as a WRAP, can help to bring most of these turning points together. The WRAP tool was developed by a group of people who experience mental distress. Following a review of the evidence-base, its' use has been endorsed by NiMHE as an effective recovery tool.

A WRAP can help young men to stay well, plan and achieve changes in their life. Examples include having a child, moving house, beginning or ending a close relationship, getting a job or education. They also help keep track of difficult feelings, experiences and behaviours and develop action plans to help to stay as well as possible. Finally, they tell others what to do when the person is feeling so unwell that they can't fully take care of themselves and keep safe.

The WRAP can be written or recorded on tape or computer. At first, people refer to them often, stick them on the fridge door and review them regularly. Over time, they become part of everyday life. They are simple in structure. Anyone could write one for themselves. It is their development and implementation that help on the recovery journey. People often share them with family or friends who can support them in adhering to their WRAP. At their most formal, these can become Advance Directives.

WRAPs are built in sections that include

- A Wellness Toolbox
- A Daily Maintenance Plan
- Identifying Early Warning Signs and Triggers (and associated Action Plans)
- Signs that things are breaking down (and associated Action Plan)
- Crisis Planning
- Post-Crisis Planning

The WRAP is a self-management and enabling tool, built and owned by the person around their strengths and choices.

In October 2003, a small group of people interested in recovery and WRAP met for a week in Southport to work with recovery educator Mary Ellen Copeland in developing recovery training and learning opportunities.

If you would like to discuss WRAP further or are interested in training on recovery and WRAP, please contact Jeremy Voaden, Mental Health Promotion Coordinator on 01452-383255
jeremy.voaden@glospart.nhs.uk.

'MEN-tal!' update

'MEN-tal!' is now on its second print run! The Gloucestershire Boys and Young Men Network's comic-style resource focussing on self-esteem and risk-taking issues, aimed at young men 16+ is starting to gain uptake nationally. The resource is produced in local and national editions, the 'Help' section in the county copy containing details of local advice and support organisations, rather than national ones. It has been pointed out to the Network that some community advice organisations are not included – this will be rectified in future editions and organisations added to the 'Help' section as appropriate. Copies for organisations working with young men can be ordered from Health Promotion Resources service on 01452 429363.

Website is a Hit

The GBYMN website www.gbymn.org.uk has received (at the time of writing, 15th March 04) 158,879 hits since June 2003. The most popular downloaded file from the website is the 'Know your Kit?' resource. Other popular downloads from the website are the Little Yellow Book and an article on the development of 'Boyz will be Boyz Comics'.

The website now contains a messageboard intended for use by all young people who attend Youth Centres which have internet access. The messageboard will be monitored by youth worker Neil Hyett of Grapevine Gloucester. The messageboard is of necessity passworded – details will be sent to Youth Centres shortly.

Successful liaison between GBYMN & LEA

On October 21st 2003 at The Moat House, members of GBYMN presented various activities from the long awaited 'Know Your Kit?' This valuable resource has been developed by Network members Paul Hopkins and Simon Gillings, in collaboration with potential users and colleagues.

Members of the Personal Social Development team from The Healthy Schools Partnership joined with PSHE co-ordinators from a selection of secondary schools across the county. Many of the schools represented are working towards level three status within the Healthy Schools Scheme and welcomed innovative ideas on how to present some sensitive topics, which are not only aimed at addressing the needs of boys and young men, but may be adapted to accommodate various groups in different settings.

Jan Urban-Smith, who leads the PSD team, gave very positive feedback from the teachers who stated they would welcome an annual update on the developments of the Network. Members of the Network also offered support for teachers who have found themselves in the role leading on PSHE initiatives. Copies of the CD-ROM of 'Know Your Kit?' are available from Paul at Health Promotion. The resource is also available as a download from the GBYMN website.

The day also provided a forum for sharing best practice and networking. Some teachers having now established a relationship with the Network may be willing to contribute to future workshops

and help when resources require reviewing to ensure they remain up to date. Generally another successful venture for the Network and one to be repeated.

Belinda Matthews, Lead School Nurse for PSHE. Tel 01452 524581

Healthy Lifestyles Magazine

There are many magazines on the shelves of our shops directed at young people. Some even focus on health issues. How many, however, are written by the young people themselves? How can the readership of those magazines influence the articles, style or issues that they contain? A new project is being started by the GBYMN to give young people the chance to do just that. Developed by the CHAT and SHAGinG sexual health peer education groups, young people across Gloucestershire are being given the chance to write articles for a new magazine. Exploring healthy lifestyles, the articles can be about any issue from blading to bad breath, smoking to school dinners. Whatever the young people want to promote, discuss or raise awareness to, the magazine will encompass.

The members of the editorial team will initially be made up from the two peer education groups with support from the County Council's Youth Service and the Health Promotion team. As the project develops, other young people from across the county will be able to join the editorial team. A pilot issue will be printed in April, in time for Easter and articles are being sent in from youth projects all over Gloucestershire.

If you would like more information on the project or would like to get involved by writing an article, please contact Simon Gillings, Gloucestershire County Council Youth Service's Sexual Health Co-ordinator on 01452 426393 or email him at simon.gillings@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

'Know your Kit?'

Team working – the development of a resource

The 'Know your Kit?' resource, developed by the Gloucestershire Boys and Young Men Network to provide information and activities on sex and relationships issues, for use by professionals working with young people, was finally launched at a GBYMN workshop in December.

The resource, which is available as a credit-card sized CD-ROM, is the result of a programme of work with boys and young men that had its conception in 2001, with a project that involved White City Youth Worker Simon Billeness and Rob Capewell at Whaddon Youth Centre in Cheltenham. Following exploration of work in areas of Gloucester, the initial project ran at Whaddon Youth Centre, using an established evidence-base of using sport and leisure as a way of engaging young men around issues that affect their health, in this instance their sexual health. The partnership also included Cheltenham Town Football Club's, Football in the Community Team, who provided the necessary sports element to the original programme.

The course at Whaddon Youth Centre, that included football coaching, 5-a-side football and sessions on sexually transmitted infections, condom use and testicular self examination, managed to successfully engage young men in talking about their sexual health. The boys that took part were awarded certificates and also given free tickets to a Cheltenham Town Football Club home game, which were eagerly sought after by the boys who lived in the football club's locale.

The project came to the attention of the Independent Newspaper, and the then Health Minister, Hazel Blears, who was quoted as saying "she wants a programme she saw in Gloucester, where boys are taught about sex in a rugby club, to become a model". The article continues, "the scheme managed to get coy teenagers, who would blanch at entering a sexual health clinic, to listen to advice on safe sex and contraception". Nonwithstanding the fact that rugby and football and Gloucester and Cheltenham had become confused (exploration of the project had initially



Simon and Paul – 'Know your Kit?' – take your pick.

included work with Gloucester Rugby Football Club and involved White City Community Project in Gloucester), the pilot programme had gained interest. Further development was necessary.

Building on this success, further piloting sessions of what works and what doesn't work with young men took place with other Youth Workers, particularly Denise Taitt at Colwell Youth Centre in Gloucester, and also with Emma Taylor at Podsmead Neighbourhood Project. Sports and leisure activities again provided a foundation for the sexual health material.

At this point Simon Gillings, Sexual Health Coordinator for the Youth Service became involved with the project. There was a realisation that whilst we had the evidence-base that sports and leisure activities do indeed attract young men to take part in courses, youth workers, school nurses and teachers needed activities and teaching notes that would provide them with the sexual health input necessary to run sessions. There are many good resources available, but some of these were not cost effective and were not readily available and to hand for professionals to use. As we had used our own material to run the pilot programme, we embarked upon a collation of material, some of it new and innovative, some of it familiar to professionals, to put together

as a compendium of activities and guidance for work with young men.

The result was 144 pages of material. Our initial aim was to produce a printed document, however this would not be cost-effective, considering that we wished to produce an inexpensive and readily-available resource. Thus the CD-ROM format was suggested by Health Promotion's Designers in Health as a cheaper alternative.

During the composition and piloting process it became clear that many of the activities could be used for work with young women as well as men, or for use in mixed gender work. The content of 'Know your Kit?' reflects this. Whilst work on the resource began with sports and leisure-based activities, the activities that go to make up 'Know your Kit?' can be used for 'stand alone' sexual-health only sessions. We acknowledge that whilst sports and leisure pursuits do indeed attract young people into participating in sessions, some young people can find this, particularly the competitive element, off-putting. 'Know your Kit?' also acknowledges that some of the activities it contains may not be acceptable for use by some organisations and offers the guidance that professionals should refer to their organisation's policies as to what is allowed. We have tried to offer variations on each activity the resource contains, to give

professionals as wide a choice as possible when considering material they would like to use.

'Know your Kit?' is presented in a consistent and easily-readable format. Each activity page is structured under headings of the name of the exercise, its aim, method of delivery, resources required, timescale and possible variations. We have attempted to make as many of the resources required to run activities available as part of the content of each exercise (although we couldn't extend this to

large foam dice and coloured pens!).

The resource is also available as a 4mb download from the GBYMN website at www.gbymn.org.uk. Over 5000 copies have been downloaded from the Network's website since it was placed on there on December 4th 2003.

'Know your Kit?' is not intended to stand still as a resource. The inclusion of further material around sexuality, relationships, and young people talking to their parents about sex have already been discussed as topics

for inclusion in an updated version, intended for release in December 2004. A package of training for professionals who work with boys and young men is under development by the Gloucestershire Boys and Young Men Network; training on the use of 'Know your Kit?' will be included part of the package.

For further information contact Paul Hopkins, Sexual Health Promotion Team on 01452 429343 or Simon Gillings Youth Service Sexual Health Coordinator on 01452 426393.

Rendcomb College win first Cotswold Shield!

(A Football & Sexual Health Competition.....)

The first Cotswold Shield, a competition that combines football with sexual health awareness for young men, was held on Sunday 8th February in Cirencester. Several youth clubs and schools were invited to enter teams for the under 18 boys tournament.

On the day, teams from Fairford, Lechlade, Northleach, Tetbury and Rendcomb competed for the crown of Cotswold Shield winners. The competition involved a standard 5-a-side football competition where all teams played against each other once. Three points were awarded for a win and one point for a draw giving the teams the opportunity to gain a maximum of 12 points from the football.

Running alongside the football was 'Getting Around', a game from the 'Know your Kit?' sexual health resource, that each team completed individually. With 5 teams competing, a maximum of 5 points was on offer for the team scoring highest in the game. The second placed team received 4 points and so on down to 1 point for the fifth placed team. The points from the game were then added to the football points to give an overall winner.

This was the first time in the Cotswolds that sport has been used in this way as a tool to help raise the profile of health issues among young people. The combination of the two proved a great success.

There were many closely fought football matches in high scoring



Rendcomb College boys with Cotswold Shield.

games with the team finishing last in the league scoring 7 goals in their 4 matches. In the end it came down to a crunch match between Fairford and Rendcomb to decide the football winners, with Rendcomb coming out on top with a 4-2 victory. There was a keenly fought battle for the remaining places with Tetbury edging out Lechlade and Northleach with a 4-3 and 4-2 score line respectively, to secure third place.

The 'Getting Around' game was equally as contested with Fairford this time beating Rendcomb to the top spot. 'Getting Around' takes the form of a giant-sized board game; the teams competed to answer as many true/false and multiple-choice questions on sexual health as they could within a set time limit. The lads taking part were keen to add to the sum of the points gained from the football competition and all teams

showed a good depth of knowledge of sexual health issues.

With the maximum 12 points gained from the football, the four points from 'Getting Around' were enough for Rendcomb to take the overall first place with a total of 16 points. Fairford were very close behind adding 5 quiz points to their 9 from the football to finish just 2 behind in second place. Tetbury secured third place with Northleach and Lechlade fourth and fifth respectively.

The competition was very well received by the 40 or so lads involved and with Cotswold District Council, the Youth Service and the Health Promotion Team coming together to organise the event, it is hoped that the Cotswold Shield will become an annual competition.

Simon Dicker, Sports Development Officer, Cotswold District Council

Visit of Lady Tumim

Lady Tumim, Chair of the Independent Advisory Group on Teenage Pregnancy, visited Gloucestershire at the end of 2003 to take a look at teenage pregnancy work being carried out in the county.

Part of the visit included a well-received presentation of the work of GBYMN at the Trust Centre, home of Sure Start Gloucester. The presentation included a showing of the under-development 'Baby Fathers' video, a copy of which was requested for the Teenage Pregnancy Unit.



Preparing for a free kick? – a few members of GBYMN!

Resources List

The resources listed are all primarily aimed at boys and young men. The Health Promotion Resources service holds many more resources, that are non-gender specific, that cover sex and relationships education, mental health and well-being, drug and alcohol use, working with young people that may be of use working with young men. For further details telephone 01452 429363. Details can also be found on their website at www.gloshp-resources.nhs.uk

BOOKS

Young Masculinities.

Stephen Frosh, Ann Phoenix & Rob Pattman

What Works With Fathers?

Trefor Lloyd

NEW! The Father's

Book – being a good dad in the 21st century. David Cohen

Promoting Men's Health; A Guide for Practitioners. Neil Davidson & Trefor Lloyd

Male Bodies; Health, Culture and Identity. Jonathan Watson.

Men's Health and Illness; Gender, Power and the Body. Donald Sabo & David Gordon.



Men's Health. Kirby, Kirby and Farah.

NEW! Bringing up Boys – A Parent's Guide. Tim Kahn.

Raising Boys Achievements in Schools. Edited by Kevan Bleach.

Young Men Leaving School; White Working Class Masculinity. Linda McDowell.

Men, Masculinities and Poverty in the UK. Sandy Ruxton

NEW! Young Gay Men Talking. Simon Blake.

Man 120,000BC to Present Day. Haynes Owners Workshop Manual.

Soldier It! Young Men and Suicide. An audit of local service provision and young men's uptake of services. Men's Health Forum.

Out of the water closet: A project to increase men's awareness about prostate health in a workplace setting. A report of research findings and evaluation of health promotion interventions. Men's Health Forum/Community Education Development Centre.

Young Offenders, Fatherhood

and the impact of Parenting

Training. A report by Catherine Dennison & Juliet Lyon. Trust for the Study of Adolescence.

MAN 120,000BC to Present Day. Haynes Owners Workshop Manual. A practical step-by-step guide to men's health.

NEW! SEX 16 years and over. Haynes Owners Workshop Manual. A practical guide to sexual health and enjoyment.

NEW! BABY Conception to two years. Haynes Owners Workshop Manual. A practical step-by-step guide to babies and toddlers. Manual aimed at Dads of all ages.

WYM. The journal for people working with young men, especially around inclusion initiatives, offending and those working in education settings.

FatherWork. The magazine for people working with families, especially fathers. Fathers Direct, the organisation that produce FatherWork also a very useful website at www.fathersdirect.com.

Dad. The new magazine for young fathers. A one-off pilot issue.

NEW! MHF – a new quarterly magazine published by the Men's Health Forum. Aimed at all



professionals who are interested in improving men's health.

Building Bridges Resource

Pack and Game – The new PSHCE resource from Working With Men. Especially useful for those working in education settings.

Building Bridges – integrating school sex and relationships education and contraceptive services for young men. A report for policy makers and practitioners – The background to 'Building Bridges'; themes, interventions – what works with young men.

The Fatherhood Pack and Game

(Revised edition) – Designed for use in education settings. To enable young people to develop knowledge,

Future Events Meetings and events

The next open meeting of the Gloucestershire Boys and Young Men Network will be at Impact Youth Centre, Lewis Lane, Cirencester on Thursday 17th June. This will take the form of an 'Away Day' to look at and build on the Network's 3 Year Action Plan. Anyone with an interest in working with boys and young men in Gloucestershire is welcome to attend. Please let Paul or Bernie know if you would like to come.

The next open meeting planned for Chequers Bridge Centre, Painswick Road, Gloucester is on September 7th at 10.00.

The Network will be holding an all-day workshop on the needs of young men from BME communities in October. Date to be confirmed. View website for further details. Planning meetings for this will be held at Chequers Bridge on April 26th at 10.00, May 24th at 10.00 and July 5th at 10.00. Please let Paul or Bernie know if you would like to get involved.

understanding and skills associated with fatherhood and parenting.

Let's hear it for the boys

– Resource designed to meet the health needs and emotional well-being of boys and young men. It offers guidelines and suggestions for choosing and developing sex education resources, also how sexual health and advice services can be made more accessible to young men. It provides training materials to raise awareness of boys' needs and to develop strategies for working more effectively with them.

Strides – A practical guide to sex and relationships education with young men. Designed for use by youth workers with groups of young men, it will also be useful in schools and colleges. The guide contains practical exercises and ideas, developed with young men, to help provide male-specific and/or male sensitive sex education.

Moving goal posts – FPA produced training manual that provides clear and practical guidance for planning and delivering training to people who want to develop their confidence and skills in providing effective sex and relationships education to boys and young men.

Weird and Wonderful World of Billy Ball Greedy – Contains a video and support manual useful to health and social professionals, teachers and youth workers who are working with young men on sexual health. Focuses on puberty, contraception, STIs and individuality.

A Man's World – Game-pack designed to help young men talk about their feelings, increase their knowledge, share experiences and look at their attitudes to being male. Covers a variety of topics including sex, sexuality, race, employment,

drugs, health, friendship, fatherhood, domestic issues and violence.

Johnny Condom – Video on condom use and the dispersion of myths.

Condoms! – A video providing instruction on the basics of condom use.

Male Image Photo Pack – 52 black & white photographs of men and boys expressing a range of emotions. A useful starting point for starting discussion.

4BOYS – FPA produced booklet on sexual health for boys and young men 14+.

Boyz will be Boyz – Comic-book on the issues boys will encounter during puberty. 10 – 13 years.

Ready, Steady, Change! – Comic-book for boys with learning disabilities on the issues they will encounter during puberty.

MEN-tal! – Gloucestershire Boys and Young Men Network's comic-book resource on masculinity and risk-taking issues, aimed at young men aged 16+. Contains language that may cause offence.

NEW! Boys Talking Balls – CDrom interactive testicular cancer awareness resource. Designed to be used with young men in schools and youth settings.

Checked your tackle? – Testicular self-examination poster.

Below the belt! – Pocket-sized leaflet on testicular self-examination.

Check your tackle – Teaching pack for testicular self-examination.

Know your balls...check 'em out! – video and booklet which takes a light hearted and frank look at the serious subject of testicular cancer.

Network Coordinators contact details

Paul Hopkins, Sexual Health Promotion Team – Boys and Young Men Specialist, Albion Chambers, 111, Eastgate Street, Gloucester. GL1 1PY. Tel 01452 429343. email: paul.hopkins@cotsvalepct.nhs.uk

Bernie Cox, Youth Service Boys and Young Men Lead, The Lodge, 47, Lewis Lane, Cirencester. GL7 1EB. Tel 01285 650067. email: berniecox@cotswoldyouth.freeserve.co.uk