

Welcome to our first edition of HeadStart Kent's newsletter!

HeadStart is a Big Lottery funded pilot project working to build the emotional resilience of 10–14 year olds across Kent. We are working with schools, families, the community and online to test and learn from approaches which help young people to 'bounce back' from the problems they face. These newsletters will provide you with updates on the HeadStart Project within each of our pilot districts—Thanet, Canterbury and North West Kent—as well as giving you information on our social marketing and digital elements, meetings, seminars, training and events across Kent.

## Social Marketing

On the 14th January the HeadStart young people's social marketing group met to identify merchandise and social media they wanted to help promote HeadStart Kent. They set up the Mi-Pod (pictured), which will be used at events as a 'pop up safe space'. They considered social marketing campaigns, mail shot campaigns and as well as the terms HeadStart Kent are using, and if they are appropriate for young people. The young people also built 100 HeadStart coping packs; these packs offer coping strategies young people can use when they're feeling low or just need something to distract them (pictured). The packs will be given to young people who use the HeadStart Safe Spaces in North West Kent, and a further 400 will be distributed over the following weeks. For more information see our 'Find Us' section.



## HeadStart National Conference in London

We attended the two day HeadStart national conference facilitated by our learning and development contractors Young Minds, Boing Boing and Achievement for All. The conference featured a variety of speakers, such as Professor Michael Ungar (Dalhousie University and co-director of the Resilience Research Centre) and Sam Gyimah MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Childcare and Education). The conference reflected on the HeadStart projects nationally so far, assessing what progress has been made and how we have been measuring resilience. The young people who attended this conference had the opportunity to meet Matt May (Young Minds) and

attend workshops for 'HeadStarters' – a group of young people sharing and evaluating at a national level. The conference focused on the ecological approach which the partnerships need to take in regard to resilience, and exploring "what's all around" to support and maintain communities to be resilient as well as the need to ensure resources are there when support is needed. The conference was an amazing opportunity to learn from other partnerships and share our ideas and progress so far.



## PRP Training in Canterbury

On the 19<sup>th</sup> January at Whitstable Youth Centre, How to Thrive facilitated the last of a three day training programme. This training was part of the international Penn State Resilience Programme and focussed on how we as practitioners, and young people, feel when an 'activating event' occurs, our beliefs at that moment and how to deal with this so we can bounce back from setbacks. Forty practitioners from the Canterbury district attended and have been provided with a

resource designed specifically for Kent which was co-produced with young people. The resource includes a curriculum and mind map (pictured) so young people can trace their journey and work on building their resilience and coping strategies. The aim is to support young people and the families outside of school with exploring thoughts and feelings, which will together with the 5 secondary and 3 primary schools in Canterbury, identify if this approach builds the skills to deal with life's set backs.



## Safe Spaces Launch in North West Kent

January has been an exciting month for HeadStart in North West Kent as it saw the soft launch of our Safe Spaces in the Orchard's Academy, Northfleet School for Girls and Swanley Youth Centre. Our HeadStart Safe Spaces will be located within schools or youth/community hubs, to provide a welcoming and accessible environment for young people with staff and resources available to give support where needed. The

Safe Spaces have been co-designed with young people, featuring furnishings such as beanbags, rugs, mood lamps and cushions, and equipment such as mood diaries so young people can write down their thoughts and feelings, as well as the HeadStart coping packs. These Safe Spaces will offer peer mentors for young people, targeted family support, access to online resources and support from Resilience Mentors.

## Youth Health Champions

The Youth Health Champions inductions and training began this month and will continue throughout February and March. The training is delivered by HYP HOP on sexual health and resilience. Our aim is to have two Youth Health champions in every secondary school across the county, and two community youth health champions in each district. Youth health champions provide peer to peer education, promote youth health at events, and support consultations with young people on health related issues.

## HeadStart Schools Survey

The national evaluators for HeadStart are moving towards launching the common measurement framework within the HeadStart schools. The survey will focus on;

1. The Child Outcome Resilience Survey (CORS) general wellbeing measure.
2. Me and My School, a

3. Student Resilience Survey, a resilience measure.
4. EQ 5DY, economic impact.

The 32 HeadStart schools within Thanet, Canterbury and North West Kent will be send

the survey by the end of February, ready for completion by Easter. Students will need to undertake the survey both this year and in spring 2016. This survey will explore the impact of the HeadStart programme. If schools have any queries relating to this survey, please get in touch via our 'Find Us' section.



# HeadStart Kent Knowledge Seminar

**HeadStart Kent** is in partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University and the University of Kent; the Universities are facilitating four Knowledge Seminars throughout this phase of the HeadStart project. We held our second Knowledge Seminar on the 21<sup>st</sup> January at Aylesford priory. These seminars are key as they shape our learning and will influence the £10 million bid

for Kent. The first Seminar back in September 2014 introduced 40 delegates to the concept of resilience, how we define resilience what it means to be resilient. This second Seminar was attended by 56 practitioners from a variety of organisations and agencies, and focussed on how we measure resilience. For any documents from this Seminar, or more information on these Seminars, please see the 'Find Us' section of this letter.



## HeadStart in Thanet

**Our HeadStart project** is up and running in Thanet which focusses on four key elements; Restorative Approaches staff training, Restorative Ambassadors young people training, Resilience Mentors and a Resilience Curriculum. Tina Mallard has provided training to 45 staff over the past few weeks in Restorative Approaches and the remaining training places are filling up quickly. Tina offers both intensive and awareness training models, looking at conflict and resolution and how to build resilience

through this. Project Salus are offering Restorative Ambassadors training to young people which is a three day programme teaching young people the dynamics of conflict, skills in daily life and ultimately peer mentoring. Our Thanet coordinator, Alex Holmes, is working with Mark Solomons from Developing Potential to introduce, and potentially re-design, a Resilience Curriculum within the HeadStart schools in Thanet. The curriculum focusses on behaviour interventions, and can be worked into the school curriculum easily.

## HeadStart Resilience Mentors

**Project Salus** were awarded the contract to provide Resilience Mentors within HeadStart schools in our pilot areas; Canterbury, Thanet and North West Kent. The Resilience Mentors will offer targeted one-to-one and group work sessions to young people aged 10-14 who need extra support and have been identified as displaying potential risky behaviour such as poor attendance and attainment, social and communication issues or behavioural difficulties. They will work with the young person for twelve sessions and are flexible to meet the young person's needs. The Mentors are trained using the Friends model and use techniques modelled on cognitive behaviour therapy. For more information on the Resilience Mentors, contact us using 'Find Us', or email

[Sally.Williamson@projectsalus.co.uk](mailto:Sally.Williamson@projectsalus.co.uk)

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