

Rights *into* Action

Newsletter of the Wales Network for Young Disabled People



Welcome to the first edition of the Right's into Action – Wales newsletter.

SPRING 2005

Rights into Action is a peer led network of young disabled people. It aims to provide a forum through which young disabled people can have a voice, and take action to promote and protect their rights.

Children in Wales are supporting the development of the network, with support from the Disability Rights Commission and Comic Relief. The network aims to provide young disabled people with opportunities to meet and have fun, learn about their rights, raise issues of concern, and have a voice in decisions affecting them. Groups across Wales have been involved in creating the network by



taking part in group activities, workshops and discussions. The groups elected representatives to attend a regional meeting in Stackpole, Pembroke and at Bala, in Autumn 2004. Children In Wales, Funky Dragon and Dynamix led the meeting.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Social model of disability were used as a basis to explore issues. Representatives will feed back to their local group, and bring new ideas and concerns to future network meetings.

As this is your newsletter, we want to know what issues are important to you. Get in touch with us and we will make sure that your thoughts and ideas are shared with the network members.



If you would like to join up to a Rights into Action Email Forum please send your email request to:

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Hi, my name is David Baker and I am your new Network Coordinator.

I live in a small village in North Wales close to Snowdon. I like walking, climbing and mountain biking so it is the perfect place to live and I like to get out as often as I can.

I have worked for the last 2 years managing a bicycle repair shop that employs people with learning difficulties and disabled people. I am a qualified teacher and

specialized in teaching people with learning difficulties to use computers. I also taught other subjects like arts and crafts and sports.

My job means that I will help you to build the network of young people in Wales and help you get your voices heard. I cannot promise that we can change things overnight. But I do promise to give as much help and support as I can so that the network will grow bigger and better and we will make a difference. I think it's going to be really exciting and fun and I'm looking forward to working with young people to make it a success.

If I can help with anything then let me know.

I look forward to working with you all.

Disability Rights Commission



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Day one: Arrival

My first impression of Stackpole was “right, it’s raining, we are about a 30 minute walk from the sea and there are no shops for a couple of miles.

If there is a storm and all our power is cut, we are dead and to make matters worse, we are right next to a cow field, so I will be kept up all night by the stupid cows”! I immediately headed for my room because I had my bag of clothes in one hand and my Guitar in the other hand. (I brought my Guitar to keep me occupied when we weren’t discussing issues) We had to go through the big circus tent type room with a roof that leaked and made horrible sounds when the

rain and the wind were bashing on it. I took my stuff up to MY room (I had a room of my own which was nice) . I then went into the cafeteria to say hello to everyone.

I met Cath Lewis from Children in Wales, Teresa from Funky Dragon, Kath from Dynamix, Lee Emery and Splodge and Rhiannon. I can’t remember everyone else because there were so many people there. Once we had all introduced ourselves we went into the main hall, which was nice and big. It had a little booth in the corner, which was a bit like a radio station booth. We started off by reminding everyone who we were.

We discussed everyone’s issues for an hour or so and then I was my turn. I was going to read it myself but I suddenly became very nervous so Zoë read it for me.

My 8 issues were:

1. Disability Awareness
2. Access to public transport
3. Right to education
4. Integrated youth facilities
5. Mixed system education
6. Better youth facilities
7. More employment opportunities for the disabled
8. Basic Human Rights

After some more people read their issues out we stopped for the night. I thought that some of the issues we had discussed on the first day were good and I thought that some of them were unnecessary.

I had made friends with a lot of the people there, and really enjoyed the day.



“So all in all my experience at Stackpole was good I thought”

Day Two: Final Day.

When I woke up at 6:30 (the earliest I have ever woken up by myself!) I got dressed, got my Guitar out of its case and went downstairs to take my medication.

I then wandered around the building strumming my Guitar and had a chat with the maintenance dude. The first signs of life I saw of anyone else was Bob in the kitchen at 7:30 cooking the breakfast while I washed the mugs from yesterday. After breakfast everyone packed up their stuff and put it in their vans they all came in.

We started our discussion at 10:00 and carried on till lunch. After lunch we played some games until 3:00 when it was time to go. Before we left Bob told us he was leaving Children In Wales to go to Dynamix, which put a stopper on what was for me a fun day. We all said goodbye to each other and wished him all the best. On the way home I sat very still and I was very quiet which isn’t like me at all, I think it was the fact that I wasn’t going to see all my new friends for a while.

“I was very quiet which isn’t like me at all, I think it was the fact that I wasn’t going to see all my new friends for a while.”

Dynamic -

Our experiences at Bala

We didn't really know anyone at first and felt a bit awkward but everyone was really friendly. It was cool to talk to other young people from all across Wales, we got to listen to their stories and experiences.

We really liked the Funky Dragon and Dynamix staff, they made the workshops good fun and helped us to understand about young people's rights. It was hard at first because we didn't like getting up in front of the group doing presentations. But as we made friends this did get easier and our confidence grew. We understand the difference between our rights and entitlements now and have been able to talk to our friends at school / group about it. At Dynamic we have been on the Internet visiting sites listed in the entitlements booklet.

We have been trying to keep in touch with the group through the message board. There are lots of great pictures from the trip and I loved using the digital camera, in fact I couldn't stop!

The food was great we loved the doughnuts & cakes and in the evening we went to the bowling alley, used the circus skills stuff (James balanced 6 plates) and one of us made a t-shirt.

"The leisure centre in our town has not got hoists that some of our group need to get into the pool. We don't think that it's fair for them to be left out so we don't go there any more!"



Here are some of the issues the representatives and the wider group would like highlighted

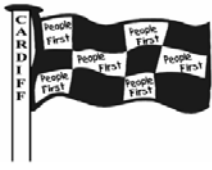
- The leisure centre in our town hasn't got the hoist equipment needed to get some of our group into the pool. We all agree that it isn't fair for some to be left out so we don't go there anymore. The leisure centre says they haven't got the money to buy one. What can we do about this?

- I would like to go to college or university but would need support. Am I entitled to this support - how does it work?

- One group member also has a disabled sibling but it has taken many years to get the disability recognized by professional bodies. The child and her parents have gone through a whole multitude of interviews, assessments and appointments with officials. The fact that his sister had not received the treatment & support she should have done until now has put a lot of strain upon his family. He wanted to know why it had taken so long to be sorted out and did this happen to other families too?

- Even after the DDA came into force there are still local buildings, which due to their structure are inaccessible for some of the young people. This sparked the debate about what adjustments should be made to ensure that all buildings are accessible to disabled people.

- What the consequences should be for non-disabled people who use disabled car parking spaces in supermarkets etc?



Cardiff People First Including More Voices



**Welcome to Young People First! We want to have our say!
We would like to join together with Cardiff People First to have our say.**

We have joined the Wales Network of Young Disabled People. It's about young disabled people's rights. We are going to help Richard and Stacie to give our views at the Network meetings to give everyone opportunities to speak up for ourselves.

We think that the Network is important because:

- We can help to make changes
- We can get information and advice
- It gives us a chance to meet other people with similar interests and make friends.
- We can find out what young people in other parts of Wales think and want.

We want to make changes in school/college – we want better and cheaper lunch at college

Leisure – what we do after school and in our spare time. We want more places for young people to go and cheaper cinema tickets

The environment – we want better bins and pavements in our area. We also want more road crossings

Moving house – we want to be independent and to have more choice of houses

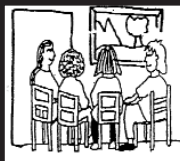
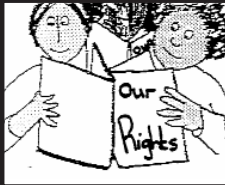
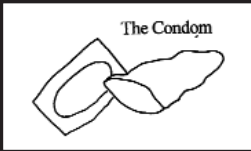
Transport – we want buses that we can all use and we think that buses should have seat belts for wheelchairs

We want to know more about sex and relationships.



Things that we want to know - sex & relationships

Everyone felt that one of the issues that most affected them was sex, sexuality and relationships.



Diseases

Learning about sex and contraception

**Our rights to get married and have babies.
We want to talk about what age we can get married.**

Information about having children and adoption

Sexuality – being gay/ lesbian

Information about support groups



How we think that we can make things better in Cardiff:

- Talk to the people in charge – eg the head teacher at the school
- Talk to people who run the service – eg the people at the bus station
- Talk to the council
- Talk to your local councillor
- Talk to your local MP or AM

What do you think about the issues we have raised - are they important to you?

Report on the Network Meeting in Stackpole



Young
Voices for
Choices

C/o Jigsaw, Youth Action Team
Milford C.E.C,
St Peter's Road,
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We really enjoyed the Regional Network meeting held at Stackpole last October it was good to meet one or two old friends and meet some new people.

Young Voices for Choices feel it is really important to meet with young disabled people from all over Wales. We would hope that the network would give us all support to inform others who make decisions of the issues which are important to us both in our area and across Wales.

For us in Pembrokeshire transport can be a big problem. We hope that we can have regular meetings to really make things happen.

Looking forward to seeing you all again soon!

Dash

DASH launched its Rights into Action scheme in Autumn 2004. It is aimed at introducing the subject of rights and responsibilities to young disabled people. In October our group got together to find out more and elected 4 representatives to attend a regional meeting at Stackpole.

Our 'reps' will feed back to their local groups before going on to a national conference in 2005. If you feel, as a young person, that you want to tell us what issues are important to you, come along to the next day out and talk to the group reps or the leaders, or get in touch with us and we will ensure that your views are shared with the group on your behalf.

If you would like to join up to a Rights into Action Email Forum please send your email request to:

rebekah_jackson@lycos.co.uk or contact Rebekah Jackson on 01545 570951

Clebran, Barnardo's Cymru

My name is Ffion Mair Jones and I am from Clynnog Fawr in Gwynedd. I am a member of Clebran – Barnardo's Cymru, a group for children and young disabled people to voice their opinions on the services provided for them in Gwynedd.

It was through Clebran that I was invited to attend the residential in Bala in October 2004. This was a good opportunity for me to meet new people from different parts of Wales and have some fun! It was an enjoyable and interesting

experience. We played games, learnt what our rights are, what we are entitled to and many other activities.

We were able to talk to each other on issues which we feel are important.

I am looking forward to the next meeting. I think it is very important for young people to have their say and the network is a good way of doing just that!

Clebran, Barnardo's Cymru

We're on the web!
www.childreninwales.com

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