

SexYOUality



Registered Charity No. 1097096

Active Youth Citizens

A presentation by Young Trainers

SexYOUality

April 24th

Introduction

- The reality for young LGB people
- Our services
- Practical Ideas
- Cambridgeshire County Council / Big Plan
- Questions and Answers

The facts

- ‘ When I told the head teacher at my school that I was being bullied because I was gay, he told me that it was my fault for coming out and that I should have kept it quiet’
16 year old,
Cambridge.



Locally

- Most young people realised their sexual identity at an average age of 13
- Young people reported feeling mainly confused, frightened, 'weird', isolated and angry when they first realised their sexual identity

Effects of homophobia

- Emotional health and well-being
- Mental health
- Confidence
- Achievements
- Self esteem
- Physical injury
- Depression
- Suicide

SexYOUality

- www.2byouth.co.uk
- Text or phone 07808 189158
- Weekly drop in youth sessions for 16-24
- Weekly drop in youth sessions for 14-16
- Young persons project group- festivals, exchanges etc...
- One 2 One service
- Information and advice
- Schools services

Young Trainers

- Big Lottery Funded – 3 year project
- Training programme for young people to train other young people – challenging homophobia
- Building self confidence, self esteem and presentation skills
- Develop a workshop of positive images and challenging homophobia

Reality

- Young Trainers involved in schools across Cambridgeshire
- This year – whole school approach – working with 4 schools
- Teacher training
- Focus Groups
- Delivering workshops
- Positive Image campaign

Luke and the Big Plan

- **How did you get involved in the big plan?**
- The *County Council* were looking for someone to be part of a team of 'YOUNG INSPECTORS', *SexYOUality* asked Luke if he was interested.
- **Why did you get involved?**
- Interested in putting a stop to bullying.
- ***“It opened my eyes, there’s actually a lot of bullying in the world ... it totally knocks your confidence ... to build up takes a real long time.”***

Luke and the Big Plan

- **What were your expectations?**
- Luke expected that the *Big Plan* would work towards stopping bullying. He thought that school teachers would be made more aware of “***what’s right***” and be trained in pro-active ways to deal with/prevent bullying

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- Luke felt this consultation was done to demonstrate the council doing something but that they were not genuinely trying to do anything.
 - Luke noticed that there was not much consideration of LGBT issues in the plan, when he mentioned this to the council they said:
 - ***“What do you expect us to do? ... trying to tackle gay bullying has been done, so we’ll tackle other issues first”***
 - Luke says: ***“You can’t pick and choose issues you have to stop everything!”***

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- **Were you the only LGBT representative?**
 - Luke was the only out LGBT person. Other groups consisted of a small group of young people with adult support.
 - **How did you feel you were treated?**
 - During the process Luke was treated well, ***“it was nice to be there”***, the *Council* provided food and in general people listened and were nice.

- **Were your expectations met?**

- No – *The Big Plan* was too general and when they challenged this by explaining specific problems and their needs, the council would not listen and made excuses.

BUT... Luke said that he did get to know other people and groups. He gained an understanding of the problems they face and realised how damaging stereotypes are to all groups of people:

- ***“You get given a label, you’re then what that label says and everyone expects that from you.”***

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- **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S AUDIT OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE 2006 -2009**
 - **"I was one of the young people involved in providing evidence for the Stonewall report on homophobia. It's a damning report, unearthing some uncomfortable truths about the reality of life for the LGBT community". "It's clear that the legacy of homophobia as enshrined in Section 28 legislation, which thank heaven no longer exists, is affecting many thousands of gay people's lives". According to the report, homophobic bullying has gone up, primarily because of this legacy". "Increased openness about the subject has only increased violent resistance to it. Some teachers have no clue whether Section 28 still exists or not. Hence their inaction on stamping out homophobic bullying". "Others turn a blind eye to it or actually collude with it, and that has been my own personal experience". "The advice goes on to urge teachers to challenge every derogatory use of the word gay to avert homophobic attitudes".**