

Restormel Short Stay School HS Plus case study

Planning change

Teenage pregnancy

We are a Cornish PRU, with vulnerable students (including children in care). Our local area also has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the country so we feel this is an area that needs to be looked at.

We have chosen to target self-esteem within SRE because we feel vulnerable children may not say how they feel (for example, may not say NO) if they do not have confidence, trust and respect in their relationships.

We operate a C-card scheme so that students can access advice from trained professionals before condoms are made available, but we have still had two teenage pregnancies (confirmed summer of leaving school) in two years.

We feel that the Safe Project would help us tackle this; it will enable the students to realise what abuse is, in all forms, and what a healthy relationship should be. We would hope, therefore, that they would go on to form better, healthy relationships based on trust, kindness, respect and honesty, rather than lacking the self-confidence to say NO.

The Safe Project

It was an excellent and informative day, with many of the students making the most of the project and getting a lot out of the day.

Unfortunately there were some problems: the Healthy Schools coordinator was unable to attend due to illness and others were not fully sure of the arrangements.

After a slow start the students got into the programme and their behaviour was excellent. However, some of the students left the room as they felt they were unable to cope. Some felt that the content was "too close to home". If we repeat the exercises it might be appropriate to choose students based on knowledge of their past experiences. We would also involve boys in the group, as it would be of equal benefit to both sexes.

The students who were unable to cope and left the room were not emotionally fit to return to their normal timetable; this had a knock-on effect around the school. In a repeat of the exercise such students would be sent to be counselled by a trained member of staff. This would then enable the students to deal with issues.

Overall it was an excellent session and behaviour was exemplary. It was very worthwhile for those who completed the day. We would recommend the Safe Project and their work within schools.

Data

We carried out a questionnaire before and after the day. Results show that after the intervention a greater number of students believe that what we teach is relevant to everyday life. The biggest change, though, is that students' self-esteem and self-respect within SRE and relationships rose. After attending the Safe Project lesson, there were no negative responses to the relevant questions in the questionnaire.

Conclusion

This piece of work has been really valuable. We have learnt lessons that we will apply in our future work. Most importantly, the work has helped students and made a difference in their attitudes as they go forward in their lives.