Open Space Event

Brathay, Ambleside
Young People on the Autism Spectrum
November 2017
FACILITATORS

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NHS Cumbria

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Cumbria County Council

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Brathay

Facilitators and helpers for the day

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Teaching Assistant

Jonna Healey  
Triple A Project

Helen Storey  
Triple A Project

Venue: Brathay Trust, Ambleside
Picture round

Aspects of health – picture pick up.

Task: Choose a picture you like. What does the picture mean to you?

Ambulances and health staff are important

- Visual testing important
- Difficulty eating
- Like travelling
- Communication: people (e.g. doctors) don’t always listen
- We need to do more to help people do more for themselves
Picture round

Exercise important
- running
- walking

Dentist scary

Health
- lots of factors

Don't like talking medication

Taking lots of tablets

Don't like injections

Listening

Cream
- Don't like the feeling of creams

Not sure what is going on in lessons
Discussion Group: Being Happy is ....

- Walking up hills
- Being with friends - talking risks
- Drinking alcohol at home
- Cycling
- Computers - games
- Building computers
- Poem writing poetry
- Playing piano
- Listening to music
- Learning about cats
- More free time
Being healthy is...

- mental health
- who you are
- getting enough sleep
- fitness
- cleaning teeth
- healthy eating
- vaccines
- talking to people
- social media
- keep protected

Being well is....

- what does it mean?!
- being alright
- drink water
- eat healthy food
- able to do what you are there for
- doing things I like helps me to do things I don't like
What is important to us?

- choice and opportunities
- autonomy
- exercise
- knowing what’s healthy
- time to think...
- bullied & teased because of autism
- worry & frustration makes us feel unwell
- boredom
- hard to know how we feel...
- what are the risks?
- misunderstanding & poor understanding
- socialising, social chat
- peer pressure
- keep busy - doing jobs
- find ways to cope
- don’t know who to ask for help...

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Being unhappy is...
- Being teased & bullied
- Being misunderstood
- Education
- Patronised
- Bike riding
- Too much choice
- Small groups & 1:1 better
- Changing rooms
- Embarrassing
- Too much choice
- Boredom
- No internet

Being happy is...
- Things that I choose to do myself
- Being outdoors
- I like the scenery
- Not going to school
- Spending time with friends
- Keeping busy
- Having a goal or task
Being unsafe is ...

- Environmental hazards
- Not sure what's going on
- GP's only there for physical stuff
- Break-in
- I don't normally feel unsafe
- Peer pressure
- Friends doing things that are wrong and I feel I'm going to get in trouble

Being safe is ...

- Try to stop friends doing bad stuff
- I can make my own judgements
- I have a good grasp on what 'risky' is
- Don't like health and safety rules
- I know what is safe and what is not
Being unwell is ...

- worry
- nervous
- get angry quickly
- if something makes me angry
- poor understanding of professionals
- Being nervous and anxious makes me feel physically sick
- reading out loud

Being well is ...

- going out
- hanging out in town
- I like to teach myself
- I imagine a game in my head
- games
- I think about a song
- I don't always know how I feel
- being able to talk on-line and live

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Being unhealthy is...

- Frustrated when being made to eat fast food
- "sell by" date on food
- No exercise

"Don't think of myself as unhealthy - but I probably am"

Being healthy is...

- Doing things round the house
- Fresh air
- Doing physical jobs
- Walking and exercise
- Like sport but fear messing up
- Frightened to get it wrong
- Like badminton
How to stay safe

Not always sure how to stay safe

School

not sure what to do in school

crossing the road

Go out at the right time of day

I need time to understand

Who is it safe to talk to?

stay away from bullies

Don't talk to strangers

Drinking at home safer than in the park

Don't give address or surname online

Who are you?

Don't want to meet wrong people at wrong time.
## Themes

### What are the risks?

- Help us to understand risks in the real world - not just in classroom.
- Making own decisions.
- Teach us how to live on our own.
- Teach us what to do in dangerous situations.

### Nervous and anxious

- Don't ask so many questions.
- Don't ask students to present or read aloud.
- Being aware of an event before it happens.
- When I get anxious, I try to think of a song or a video and play it in my head.
Boredom

Days out at the weekend with parents

Autism group to meet young people

more non-uniform days

more opportunities & options

- more variety in school

When I'm bored I like to help at home

receiving more tasks to stay occupied

Poor understanding

Autism is....

People with autism telling people about autism

Autism is not...

Autism is....
**Being teased and bullied**

- Teach us coping strategies
- Linked with knowledge of autism
- Listen!
- Autism is...
- More knowledge in schools

**Socialising**

- Clubs with other autistic young people
- School trips for people with autism
- More opportunities to do things with friends
- Chances to meet more people
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Quotes from the day

Thank you for getting the boys to the Open Space event last Friday, 'J' was 'buzzing' afterwards, then fell asleep on the way home and we’re so proud of 'L'.

Hopefully 'S' will be able to build on the importance of the skills she used during the day now.

Thank you!

I just wanted to say how much 'B' enjoyed the day at Brathay.

She felt it was 'like a breath of fresh air' and that 'she was not alone anymore'.

She would also love to meet up again with the boys sometime to have a catch up.