



DARE TO DREAM
A TOOLKIT
FOR COMMUNITY
ACTION PROJECTS

#DREAMON

“

**WATCH THE
RIPPLES
CHANGE THEIR
SIZE, BUT
NEVER LEAVE
THE STREAM”**

‘Changes’ by David Bowie



THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGING”

Bob Dylan

The Dare To Dream toolkit was designed by Mess Up The Mess to support young people in creating new Community Action Projects across Wales. It contains practical advice and tips, and is a step by step guide following the path of Community Action Projects from creation to completion.

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SECTION 1

CHANGE

Do you ever think about change?

Are there things you would like to change within your own community?

There are things we can't change, because we have no power over them.

If we live in the UK we have to accept the weather, because we know we can't change it.

But there are things we can change.

This toolkit will support you in making changes to your world.

Starting with the places where you spend time.

Your communities.

Like a pebble chucked in a pond, a small change can ripple out and affect everything.

Mess Up The Mess is a theatre company that works with young people to help them make changes to the world around them.

We do this through Community Action Projects.



WHAT IS A COMMUNITY ACTION PROJECT?

IT CAN BE HARD TO NAIL DOWN...

ONE: It's like pebbles isn't it.

TWO: What? What?

ONE: Pebbles. So you

TWO: Really? Are you? Are we really doing this?

ONE: It's like you throw a pebble into a pond and it

TWO: Makes ripples

ONE: Ripples. Exactly. Things change.

TWO: The ripples change things

ONE: Exactly

TWO: The ripples are the change.

ONE: Right.

TWO: Ok who throws the pebble?

ONE: Whoever. You know a group of you, maybe.

TWO: Ok. Ok. Ripples. Thank you

In this toolkit we will give you some examples of Community Action Projects delivered by Mess Up The Mess in the last 3 years. Here is the first.

CASE STUDY 1:



In 2014, a group of young people from Youth Cymru's Trans*Form project decided that they would like to raise awareness of issues around gender identity and their experiences as trans* young people growing up in Wales. They wanted to make people more aware of some the issues faced by the trans* community, including difficulties in accessing support and healthcare and the high levels of self-harm and suicide among trans* young people.

HUMANEQUIN

With the assistance of Mess Up The Mess, professional writers and creatives, the trans* young people created a show, Humanequin, which toured to schools and professionals who work with young people. It has been seen by over 300 people. They also created a film based on their experiences which has been viewed online over 1000 times.

Following the project, young people from Trans*Form continue to meet regularly, sharing stories and offering mutual support. They have also delivered trans* awareness training to hundreds of young people and the professionals who work with them.

A young person involved said the following:

“Six months ago I was sat in my bedroom. I did not feel like I had any friends and now I am in a position where I have this whole network around me. It is the peer support that has been huge in helping my growth in confidence.”

Teachers said the following after seeing the show:

“I will now ask for the pronoun of young people in all activities”

“I will no longer divide my class by gender”

These are real changes made in real places by real people.

HUMANEQUIN was a Community Action Project.

WHICH COMMUNITIES?

Before you can start thinking about making a change in a community, it is a good idea to think about which communities you belong to or are part of.

You may belong to more communities than you think you do. You could start by identifying all the communities you belong to. These can include family, religious, school, youth group, drama group, fitness group, sexuality, gender etc.

SO WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE TO THESE COMMUNITIES?

This is about daring to dream, really.

You might want to make a change to a community – e.g. to make people in a community behave in a more tolerant way towards each other

Or you may want to make changes for a community – e.g. to provide a place where young people in a community can meet and socialise.

A community action project might be about raising awareness of an issue you think is important – transgender, mental health, social media bullying.

It might be about making something that makes life better for people – a herb garden, a gallery, a play area.

It might be about changing beliefs or behaviour – for example challenging racism or homophobia.

It could be about raising awareness of the issues facing certain groups: e.g. travellers, refugees.

It's about making a difference.

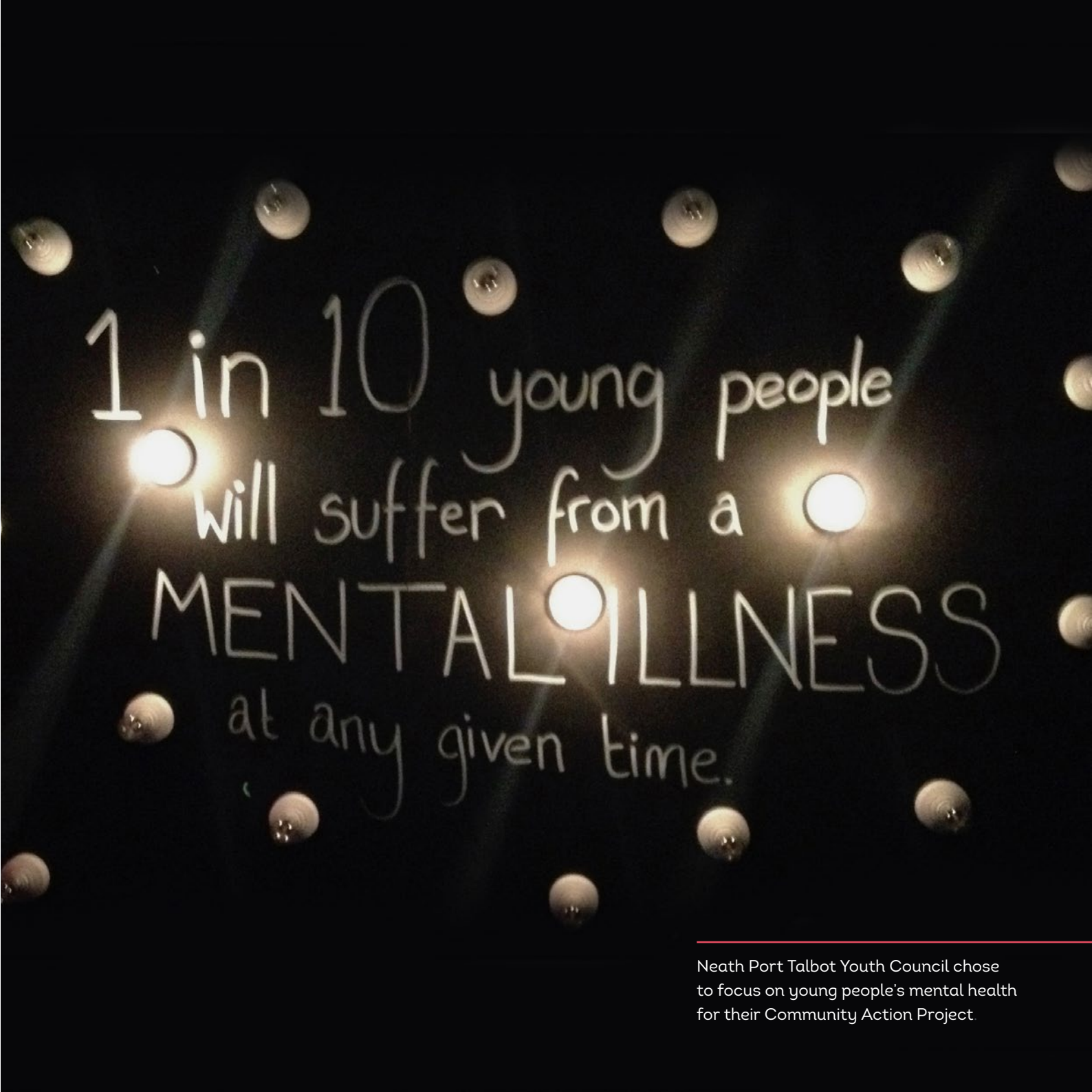
CAN YOU DO IT?

Yes you can. And we are here to help.

A YEAR FROM NOW YOU WILL WISH YOU HAD STARTED TODAY

Karen Lamb



A blackboard with white chalk text and small round lights. The text reads: "1 in 10 young people will suffer from a MENTAL ILLNESS at any given time." The words "MENTAL ILLNESS" are in all caps. There are several small, round, white lights scattered around the text, some of which are illuminated, creating a bokeh effect.

1 in 10 young people
will suffer from a
MENTAL ILLNESS
at any given time.

Neath Port Talbot Youth Council chose
to focus on young people's mental health
for their Community Action Project.

SECTION 2

CREATIVE INVESTIGATION

So having identified your communities you now need to have an area to work on. You need to find out, in fact, what people want to change. The simplest way to do this is by having a creative investigation. You might want to run a session like this in your youth group or school. It will take about 25 minutes.



HERE'S A ROUGH PLAN:

SESSION PLAN

1. Ice breaker. The reason for this is that people are often nervous when they enter a new space with people they do not know. It is a good idea to do an activity that lets them relax by talking to each other or moving around. Absolutely any activity that relaxes people and gets them to start to communicate will work here. You may have your own ideas for this. Here are some suggestions to help you.
 - A Pass the clap around the circle. The workshop facilitator gets everyone to form a circle. They explain that they will clap once and that then the person next to them to the right will clap, then the person next to that, until the clap has passed round the circle and returned to the facilitator. It is likely that the time taken to pass the clap round the circle will be slow the first time. Repeat twice more, noting with the group how it improves.
 - B Ask everyone to form into one line according to the month they were born in-January one end, December the other. This will encourage people to communicate. This can be repeated for number of siblings, pets etc. Best not to use physical characteristics like height.
 - C Tell people they have 30 seconds to shake hands with and introduce themselves to as many people as they can in the room.
2. In Groups of 3 or 4 write down 5 things that make you angry in your community. Things that make people cross are probably things that they care enough about to change.
3. Feed these ideas back to the room. One spokesperson per group. Identify common ground. Clarify. If people are less comfortable speaking you might want to let people come up with their ideas on Post-it notes and put them on a chart at the front of the room for you to read out.
4. Talk about the fact that anger can be really useful if we channel it to take action
5. Groups with paper or Post-its again write down some positive ways that we could change these things that make us angry
6. Feed back to whole room again. Thank the participants. Say that you will take all this work away and come to the next meeting with a top 3 of things the community wants to change and a top 3 of how.

It is that simple.

Here's how it works in reality...

CASE STUDY 2:



In 2016 MUTM ran a project in Merthyr around social media bullying called 'Trapped Within'

TRAPPED WITHIN

Trapped Within was a Community Action Project partnership between Mess Up The Mess and Forsythia Youth Project, Merthyr Tydfil. It was an immersive narrative driven experience exploring how we use social media.

Imagine you're locked in a bedroom and you only have an hour in which to solve a mystery and escape. The only way to leave is by finding clues and solving problems. In an age where bullying has changed and it's easy to hide behind a keyboard can YOU beat the trolls at their own game?

The aims of Trapped Within were:

- To empower and encourage people to use social media in a more positive way. To encourage people not to use bullying. To get people to think before they post or tweet.
- To reduce the amount of time people spend on social media, freeing up time for other less solitary activities
- To encourage people to be more safe and secure on social media. To let people know about privacy settings on social media and raise awareness of the consequences of social media posts on others. Did the person want their details made public? Did they know they were being talked about?

CHANGE TARGETS

- To reduce the time young people spend on social media and use this time more positively
- To stop the creation of so-called banter pages, which can be used as a way to bully and expose people's private lives on Facebook anonymously. Specifically the young people wanted to shut down a page called Merthyr Banter, because of the negative and abusive comments being made on the site.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Creation of an immersive, interactive theatre piece in a real house in Merthyr.
- A petition to campaign for shutting down banter pages
- People were supported to change their personal security settings on social media to friends/family or private, and actively given tutorials in achieving this.

Audience feedback on Trapped Within included:

"This is a really good way to highlight how bullying affects people. Educational and fun"

"It was a good experience for me - it shows how it feels to get bullied"

For more on Trapped Within, check out:

www.messupthemess.co.uk

SECTION 3

PLANNING

**I CAN ACCEPT FAILURE,
EVERYONE FAILS AT
SOMETHING. BUT I CAN'T
ACCEPT NOT TRYING**

Michael Jordan



So once you have spoken to people and found out what they want to change, what happens next?

You need to make a simple plan that states what your aims are.

Then you need to write out a simple plan of how to get there.

So say you wanted to rebuild and clean up a local park,

Your aim might be to make the park a safe and happy space for young people and old.

Community Action Project Plan

Group: One Community
Project Name: Generations

AIM
To increase understanding between young people and older people in our community.

OBJECTIVES
(SMART – Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic, Timely)
Carry out investigation of what young people and older people think of each other
Create a performance with young people and older people
Share it with the wider community at a coffee morning

TASKS AND MILESTONES:

What	By When	By Who
Arrange to meet with community groups for older people	Sept 15th	Peter
Book rehearsal and performance venue	Sept 20th	Peter
Visit groups	During Oct	All
Recruit participants	During Oct	Joanne
Meeting to decide what to take forward	Nov 1st	All
Rehearse	During Nov	All
Book refreshments	Nov 6th	Peter
Perform	Dec 2nd	All

Your objectives will be how you get there so, e.g.

- 1. Meet with local residents
- 2. Assemble volunteer group
- 3. Approach local council for help
- 4. Five days clearing park
- 5. Installing new play equipment

Next to each objective you might put who will do the task and when.

It will help you and everyone involved if your objectives are **SMART**, so they need to be

Specific
Name exactly what it is, so, for example 'tell 100 people about our helpline' not 'let people know about our helpline'

Measurable
Numbers, figures, targets

Agreed
Everyone involved has to have said they are ok with the objective

Realistic
Only attempt to change what you can change.
(Sunshine in Swansea every day is not a realistic objective)

Timely
When is this being delivered by? Dates.

It's a cliché, but if you fail to plan, you plan to fail.

SECTION 4

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

**YOU MISS 100% OF THE
SHOTS YOU NEVER TAKE**

Wayne Gretsky



Once you have a project plan in place, you need to work out how to make it happen.

You will need a Project Manager - that's someone who takes overall responsibility for the project. If you are partnering with a school or a youth group you will need to make sure that everyone knows who is responsible for what.

You will also need to come up with a simple budget. This is nowhere near as scary as it sounds and it just involves breaking down what money you have and how / where you will spend it.

Your project will involve people. And part of your responsibility in running the project will be to look after those people and make sure they are safe. To protect you and to protect them you need to think about this. Here is an example of how to do this.

Community Action Project Budget

Group: One Community
Project Name: Generations

INCOME	
Donations	£25
GwirVol Youth Led Grant	£400
TOTAL INCOME	£425
EXPENDITURE	
Hire of hall for rehearsals	£100
Travel expenses (bus tickets)	£100
Hire of hall for performance	£25
Equipment Hire	£50
Refreshments for 30 people	£120
Materials	£30
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£425

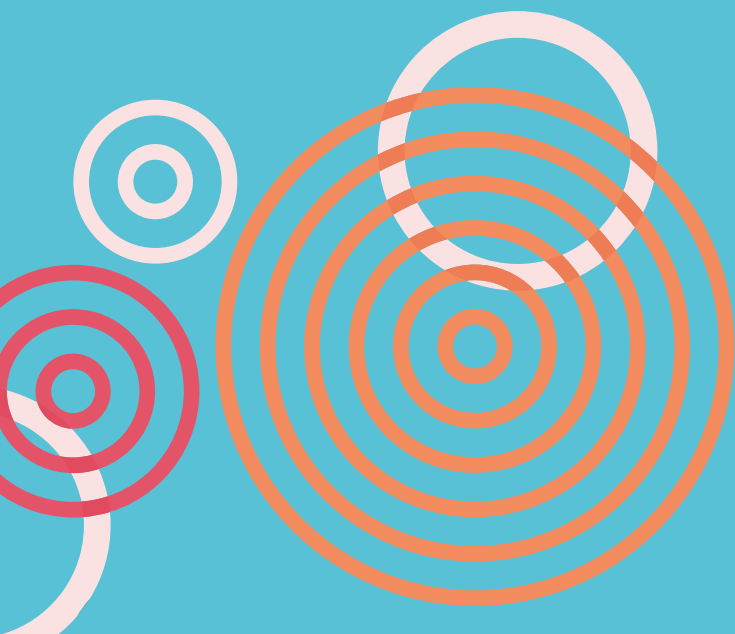
Community Action Risk Assessment

Group: One Community
Project Name: Generations

WHAT ARE THE HAZARDS	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	WHEN WILL IT BE DONE BY?	DONE
Slips, trips and falls	Audience members / Participants	Check hall floor is dry and free from obstructions	Peter	Day of Event	
Work at height	N/A	No work at height is required	Peter		
Vehicle movement	Audience and participants arriving	Ensure entrance is clear of parked cars	Joanne	Day of event	
Electricity	Participants	All equipment PAT tested. Visual inspection before use	Joanne	Nov 30th	
Manual Handling	Participants	All participants briefed on safe handling	Joanne	Day of event	
Fire	Audience and participants	Participants brief on evacuation plan	Joanne	Day of event	

SECTION 5

MARKETING... GETTING IT OUT THERE



The young people from Forsythia Youth Project invited a local MP to come to Trapped Within...

He saw the project.

He loved it.

And as a result he promised to raise the issue of Merthyr Banter in the House of Commons.

This is an example of how powerful it can be to reach people who have power themselves.

You need to think about how you will tell people about the work you are doing.

This might include:

- Inviting influential people – Community Leaders, Head teachers, councillors, MPs
- Publicising on social media
- Targeting your publicity to the audience you need to reach. Is the best method Snapchat? Or a poster on the wall of a community centre?
- Using organisations that already have links with the groups you want to reach. So if you want to reach young people, Mess Up The Mess, who work with many young people, are a very good group to approach for ideas.

MARKETING -THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:

Your budget. How much of your entire budget do you want/need to spend on marketing?

Who do you most need to reach in order to achieve your aims? (i.e. what is your target audience?)

What benefits are there in people seeing /getting involved with your project?

- Why should they attend?
- Will it be entertaining?
- Will they learn anything new?
- How will it improve their lives?

Community Action Project Marketing Plan

Group: **One Community**
Project Name: **Generations**

WHAT'S THE STORY / KEY MESSAGES
Young people and older people – Together we can make a difference

WHO DO YOU WANT TO REACH?	WHAT'S IN IT FOR THEM?	HOW WILL YOU REACH THEM?	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHEN WILL IT BE DONE?
Local newspaper	Positive story with unique twist	Press release	Anji	Nov 12th
Wider community	Free coffee! A chance to meet new people	Make flyers and posters	Tony	Oct 30th
Local MP	Association with positive event in community	Write letter of invitation	Anji	Sept 15th

When you contact people, remember the 5 W's: Who you are, What you're doing, Where, When and Why you're doing it

SECTION 6

THE EVENT

There are many ways to achieve your aims in a Community Action Project. You need to work out the best one for you.

Here are some ideas;

- You might throw a party for the people you want to start talking to each other/understanding each other better
- You might create an interactive even like Trapped Within, described in Case Study Two.
- You might create a theatre piece to get your ideas across

The next two Case Studies might give you some practical ideas.



Young Carer's Breakfast Challenge

You have 2 minutes to complete the following tasks

Your Tasks:

- Give Ben some breakfast
- Get your own breakfast
- Find Ben's jumper
- Sort Mum's tablets for the day
- Find your homework
- Find the note from Mum saying she'll be late
- Iron Jane's shirt

Good luck!!

Barnardo's Newport Young Carers created an immersive drama in which you experience 24 hours in the life of a young carer

CASE STUDY 3:

The background image shows several wooden mannequins in various poses, some standing on large, rough tree stumps. The mannequins are light-colored wood, and some have black ribbons or wires tied around their bodies. The setting appears to be an art installation or a workshop with a rustic, natural theme.

Unseen and Unheard was a partnership Community Action Project between Mess Up The Mess and Bawso. Bawso is an organisation that provides support to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Communities, providing specialist services for them.

UNSEEN AND UNHEARD

Mess Up The Mess and Bawso worked with young people from Swansea's BME communities and asylum seekers to create artworks and an exhibition exploring the hidden stories of the BME communities in Swansea.

AIMS

- Create an interactive art exhibition of things that are unseen and unheard within the BME community of Swansea.
- Raise awareness of issues affecting BME and asylum seeker communities in Swansea, including honour based violence, Female Genital Mutilation, forced marriage and human trafficking.
- Encouraging people from different communities to come together and learn about each other.

CHANGE TARGETS

Our big change – for the Western world to know about the unheard and unseen events happening in other cultures and countries in the world.

Our local change – for our community to come together, regardless of cultural differences

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Creation of interactive art installations by members of the Bawso Youth Group in Swansea that take audience members on a visual journey through the eyes of an asylum seeker. Exploration of cultural traditions and violence against women.
- Creation of a comic that tells the true story of a young asylum seeker's journey from Eritrea to Swansea, raising awareness and increasing knowledge of the types of journeys that many immigrants experience before finding refuge in Wales.
- Community drop-in art workshop based on the art exhibition's theme of "community"

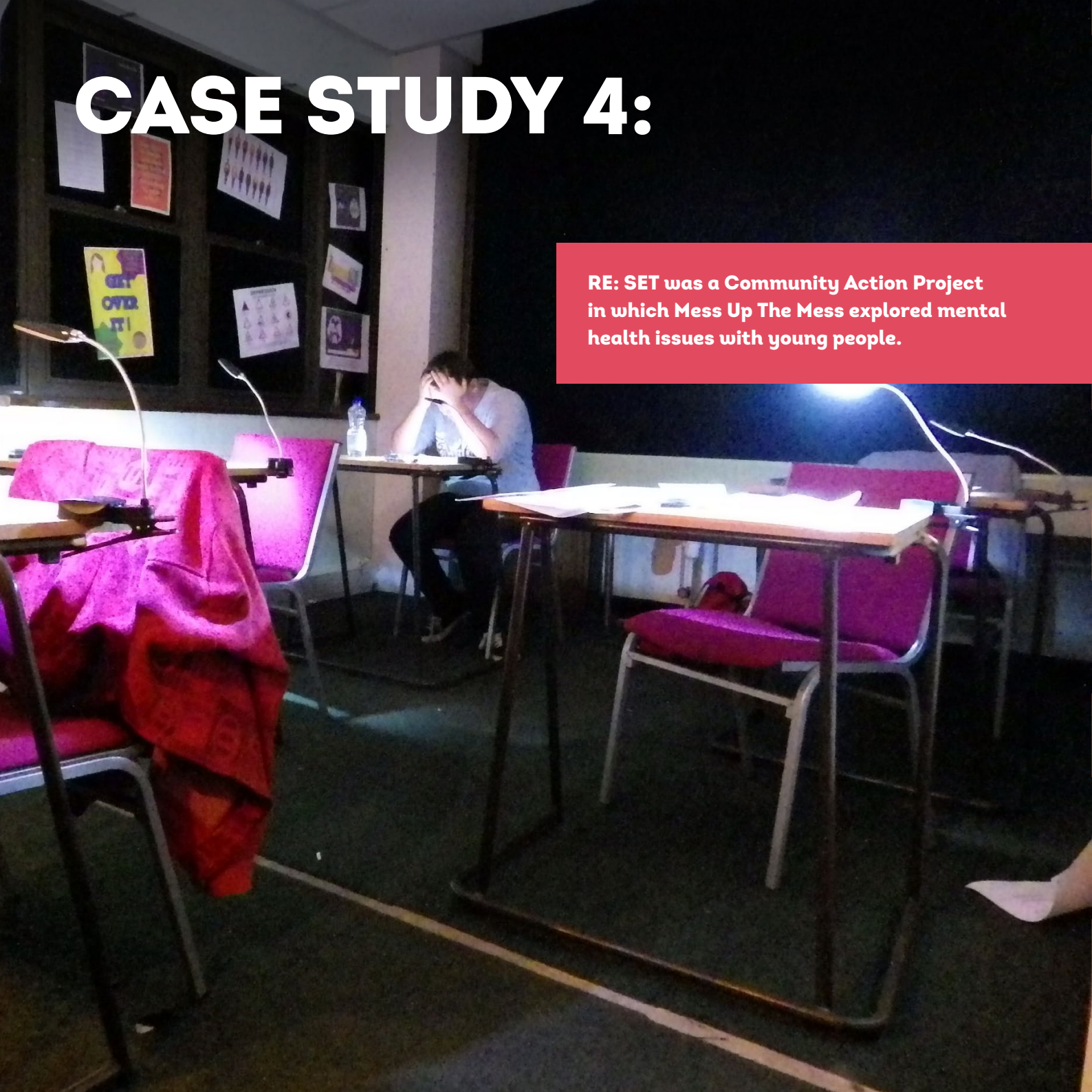
Audience feedback on Unseen and Unheard included:

"I have learnt first-hand experiences from Michael and his journey from Eritrea and reasons for him leaving"

"I realise that there are still issues/problems faced by the BME communities in Swansea and that more should be done to help these communities"

CASE STUDY 4:

RE: SET was a Community Action Project in which Mess Up The Mess explored mental health issues with young people.



RE:SET

Seventeen year old Cai feels like life is spinning out of control

The Project took the shape of a Forum Theatre piece, devised with young people and exploring mental health issues. In Forum Theatre the audience are able to interact directly in making decisions for the actor in the drama.

The aims of RE: SET were:

- To create a forum theatre production exploring stress and anxiety; an issue identified by the group themselves.
- To tour the production to schools, colleges and theatres.

CHANGE TARGETS

- To enable young people to ask for help when experiencing mental health concerns
- To provide young audiences with the solutions to address problems with mental health issues

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Re-Set was performed and toured by MUTM participants to schools, colleges and theatres.
- The play was then taken on by 3rd year students in Trinity Carmarthen and toured to further schools, colleges and youth groups.
- The Samaritans were able to support the production by providing literature that was disseminated after the performances.

- Carmarthenshire Youth Council attended the performance and asked young people from Mess Up The Mess to create a short piece of forum theatre for their youth conference

LESSONS LEARNED

- Working in partnership with other community, voluntary and statutory organisations can strengthen your project
- Explore the opportunities to disseminate your project results more widely

Audience feedback on RE: SET included:

“It made me feel differently I now know that there is help available”

“It made me realise mental health is not an easy issue to deal with and it is better to talk to someone”

“Those who have support may sometimes take it for granted as not everyone is lucky enough to have friends or family”

You can learn more about the project here:

www.messupthemess.co.uk

SECTION 7

EVALUATION & CELEBRATION

There many ways to evaluate the success of your project. The first thing is to look at your aims and check whether or not they were met. These are some questions you might want to ask.

- Do you feel differently as result of this project?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective do you think this project was in achieving the aims it set out?
- Have you learned anything as a result of this project?



There are lots of different ways you might use to gather this feedback. You might have a questionnaire for people to fill in, either in person or online. You might ask people to put answers on post-it notes. In one Mess Up The Mess project the audience were asked to peg their feedback on a washing line. The idea is to motivate as many people as you can to respond to your questions, so it is worth thinking creatively about how you might do that. Monitoring is about collecting information about what is happening, while it's happening-e.g. how many people attend a performance. Evaluation is putting a value on what you finally achieved so:

- Did you meet your objectives?
- Was the project worth doing?
- Did you do it well?
- Did you achieve other things along the way?
- Did you use your resources (Money, time, people, and spaces) well?

You can be imaginative in how you evaluate.

Here are some examples of how Mess Up The Mess have gathered feedback on their projects

- The Re-Set audience feedback was designed and led by young people. Young people worked hard to use forum theatre approaches to effectively gather audience feedback by taking on the role of doctors with clipboards to capture information on audience feedback forms
- The Trapped Within project used Pledge Cards to allow people to adopt personal pledges to change the way social media is used. A voting box was used to vote for real life. A proactive decision could be taken to change the way they used social media. People pledged to spend

more time in real life than the virtual world. A graffiti wall was used to informally comment on what people enjoyed. This involved people writing their positive feedback onto a wall in marker pen. Live tweeting of feedback was encouraged using the hashtag [#challengehetroll](#).

CELEBRATION

Community Action Projects are so special because they have a life beyond the initial changes they make. These are the ripples that are sent out by Community Action Projects. For each teacher in a staffroom telling others about gender pronoun use, for each Swansea resident with increased awareness of refugee journeys, for every Newport headmaster telling his 80 staff to be more aware of the needs of the Young Carers in their school, there are short term changes and long term ones. Only by getting these messages out there can we hope to change things, and the ripple effect means that in the end it is not just the one community that changes, but nearby and related communities. Just 30 years ago the idea of same-sex marriage would have seemed an impossible dream to most people. Enough voices raised can effect real change.

Some questions for you:

- Who are the people you need to thank/reward for their help/participation in the CAP?
- What is the best way to do that?
- If the project is still going, how do you keep thanking them? People need ongoing motivation.

SECTION 8

WHERE NEXT?

This toolkit gives you practical guidance and ideas to initiate your own Community Action Project. With your motivation and commitment, you can make a difference. Without the pebble, the surface of the water remains the same. Are you ready to make ripples that lead to sustainable change?

If you think you might have an idea for a CAP here are some organisations you can approach and websites you can use for support /help/information.

Ideas for Funding

GwirVol Youth Led Grants

<http://www.gwirvol.org/en/organisations/funding/youth-led-grants/>

Awards for All Wales

<https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/programmes/wales/awards-for-all-wales>

Community Foundation in Wales manage many funds including the Fund for Wales
<http://www.cfiw.org.uk/>

Local charities such as **Lions Club** and **Rotary Club** often offer small grants to local community groups.

Many national retailers (including Tesco and Wilkinsons) give small grants to local community projects. Search online or ask at your local store.

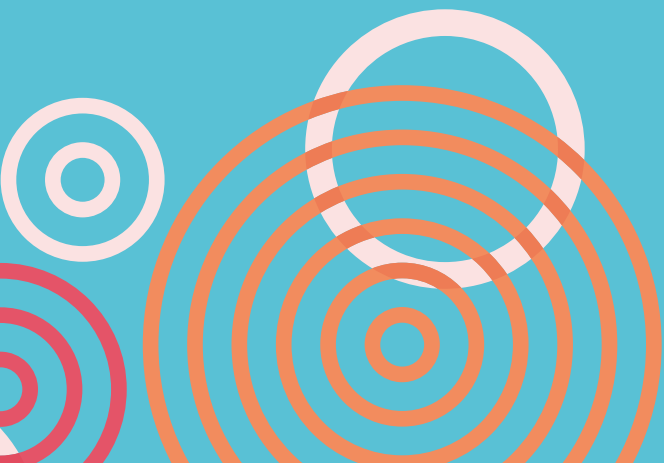
Further Information

Search your App Store for "**Youth Social Action**" app by Safer in Tees Valley and UK Youth

Just Act provides links to many resources that can help with setting up community projects
<http://www.justact.org.uk>

This guide and the resources used in it are available from the Mess Up The Mess website:

www.messupthemess.co.uk





Notes

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**EACH TIME A HUMAN STANDS UP
FOR AN IDEAL, OR ACTS TO IMPROVE
THE LOT OF OTHERS, OR STRIKES
OUT AGAINST INJUSTICE, HE SENDS
FORTH A TINY RIPPLE OF HOPE, AND
CROSSING EACH OTHER FROM A
MILLION DIFFERENT CENTRES OF
ENERGY AND DARING THOSE RIPPLES
BUILD A CURRENT WHICH CAN SWEEP
DOWN THE MIGHTIEST WALLS OF
OPPRESSION AND RESISTANCE**

Robert F Kennedy

A LITTLE ABOUT US: WHO ARE MESS UP THE MESS?

We make awkward and brave theatre, by, for and with young people. We are a professional theatre company committed to using theatre and the arts as powerful tools to engage and empower young people to make their voices heard. From small scale devising workshops and preparation for work training to large scale site-specific theatre, Mess Up The Mess encourages young people to believe in themselves and their ability to make their world a better place.



Gyda chefnogaeth / Supported by

BBC
Plant Mewn Angen
Children in Need

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