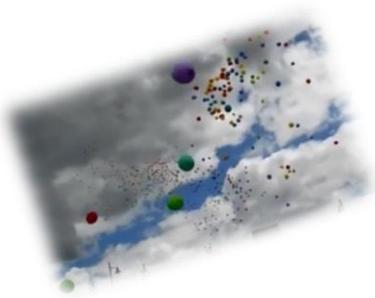




Together North East Festival

Saturday 27th June 2015

A big thankyou to everyone who made it possible



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Acknowledgements



'Thanks to everyone who worked so hard on this day and achieved a fun packed day'

We would like to acknowledge all the work of the planning team and wider supporters. In every aspect they went 'the extra mile' to make the festival a great day.

Background

The idea for the Together North East Festival came from the Learning Disability Partnership. The Partnership is attended by people with a learning disability, families, carers and professionals from across the region who come together to share information, challenges and solutions.

Members of the Partnership began to voice their desire to do something different; something that did not focus on the needs of people with learning disabilities, but that showed their achievements and aspirations; something that includes more people, is much bigger and engaging. The festival idea was born!

Aim of the festival

We agreed that the overall aim was to celebrate the lives of people with a learning disability; be proud of who they are and some of the things they have achieved.

Objectives

The specific objectives within this aim were agreed as follows:

- To raise awareness of the positive contribution that people with a learning disability make in their families; their work and their community.
- To challenge the stigma and discrimination that people with a learning disability sometimes face.
- Celebrate the achievements of people with learning disabilities
- Promote positive images of people with learning disabilities
- Campaign for greater inclusion of people with learning disabilities and wider representation by mainstream media
- Provide social enterprises with the opportunity to advertise and share their products
- Provide opportunities to find out more about health, community and social care

Working together

To achieve our aims and objectives we set up a steering group, which included 8 people with a learning disability and had representation from each local area

We worked together to develop a plan, keeping people with a learning disability at the heart of the design and decision making. We took draft plans back to the wider partnership meetings to allow us to build on and sign off the plans – for example, choosing the name of the festival and the activities within the festival.

As well as contributing ideas people with a learning disability took real responsibility on many areas of the festival development – for example:

- Reviewing and auditing venues
- Making local and regional connections to support the day
- Leading the opening of the festival
- Designing resources
- Stewarding duties on the day

Everyone on the planning team learnt something new; from designing posters, health and safety planning to walking the catwalk for the first time.



'To pull off so effortlessly (looking) and seamlessly something so complicated was a truly great feat'

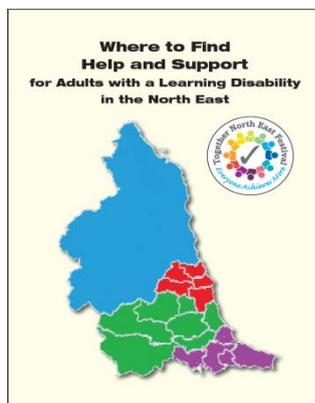
Partnership working

Students said they had never experienced anything like this before

We developed great partnership work both within and outside the Learning Disability Partnership; people cheerfully gave of their time and talents. Working with our external partners; Sunderland University, Tyne and Wear Sports and Statutory Agencies gave organisations an opportunity to see the person behind the disability and learn how to work alongside disabled people.

People with a learning disability had opportunities to work alongside different organisations. This helped them to develop more confidence, gain new experiences and to raise their personal expectations.

In addition to delivering activities on the day we also produced some resources together:



The Festival Day

The festival was attended by approximately 650 people. It was full of fun and activities; drama, film, Latin American Carnival, fashion show, workshops and stalls. People were amazed at the shows and performances. Organisations and social enterprises were able to demonstrate and sell their products and interactive activities helped participants find out more about health and well-being.

The day was attended by lots of local residents and people who do not usually attend events involving people with a learning disability. It created positive images of people with learning disabilities in the press, thus addressing some of the negative stereotypes people hold.

You can find out more about all the things we did in the attached programme



What people said about the day:

'The fashion show was an amazing event'

'Families were so proud, having never before had the opportunity to see their relative in that way'

It was so good to see the joy on people's faces and their enthusiastic comments

'Our Clients had amazing day especially the dancing and drumming'

Seeing people with a learning disability taking active role in performing and volunteers was great

I loved getting my nails done

I made good contacts on the day

We were busy all day with the graffiti names and telling people about our enterprise

Lessons learnt

The festival was well planned and delivered on the day but there are always things that could be done better. Some of the things people said we could improve are:

- There was a great turn out but people seemed to leave early evening, so maybe shorten the day if we were to do again
- If we did something like this again should we involve organisations like Independent Living Centres from the beginning and look at ways of better involving the NHS
- Find other ways of contacting people with a learning disability who aren't part of any organised activities.
- Travel expenses for planning meetings were high; we need to factor this in to any similar work
- It would have been great if more people had been supported to come. Traffic Management were not very helpful; use another company if we do this again.

Conclusion

We set out to celebrate the lives of people with a learning disability; be proud of who they are and some of the things they have achieved. Everyone went away feeling positive and energised to carry on campaigning with people with a learning disability so that they can have better lives. We hope that you will see from the report that our aims and objectives were achieved.

Appendix 1

Funding

Income

Awards for All Grant	10000	
Contributions from Local Authorities and NHS	8000	
Contribution from Inclusion North	493.18	
Total		18493.18

Expenditure

Design costs	324.00	
Organisers and volunteer expenses	1207.46	
Stationery and printing incl balloons, bags, t-shirts	4315.52	
Performers and stallholders fees	8227.37	
Venue costs incl traffic management, first aid	4418.83	
		18493.18

Note:

In addition to financial contributions, several organisations gave a significant amount in terms of staff time and resources which made a considerable difference to the success of the Festival.

These organisations funded the day

