

Healthy
Conversations

The
FOYER
Federation



Healthy Conversations:

A guide to developing positive health and well-being outcomes with young people



The Foyer Federation

The Foyer Federation is a not-for-profit organisation that helps to transform the circumstances of young people who have faced barriers in their lives. Since 1992, we have worked with young people to create new approaches, developing the skills and resources they need to thrive.

Our ground breaking campaigns and initiatives are led through a network of 120 accredited learning and accommodation centres known as 'Foyers'. These Foyers provide up to 10,000 16-25 year-olds per year with mutually agreed, tailor-made programmes which give the young people access to housing, learning, personal development, training and employment opportunities in line with their needs and goals.

Working through our network and by forging new partnerships, the Foyer Federation will continue to provide high quality leadership in the field of youth development. We will create, pilot and test a portfolio of innovative, specialist services, activities and campaigns with and for young people.

By placing young people at the heart of all we do, we will strive to achieve our vision for all young people to have a chance to realise their potential, build a thriving, independent and sustainable adulthood, and become a valuable asset to society.

We have recently launched our seven year strategic vision, which sets out our intention to create an **"Advantaged Thinking"** movement. Advantaged Thinking is about seeing young people as possibilities and investing in their talent and aspiration, rather than letting their 'problems' and 'deficits' define them.

The Healthy Conversations programme has been designed with Advantaged Thinking at its core and demonstrates what the ethos looks like in practice. It is one of the many approaches the Foyer Federation offers to shape better outcomes with and for young people.

www.foyer.net

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Using this guide

Who is this guide for?

This pack has been written for managers and practitioners who wish to improve health and well-being outcomes among young people. It equips staff with the tools and understanding to take a positive approach to young people's health, and to influence positive change in the community. The approaches and tools can be used in a variety of community settings.

Where has it come from?

The contents of this pack have been created using learning from three major health programmes developed and delivered by the Foyer Federation:

- **Healthy Transitions**, a three year programme that started in 2007, funded by the Big Lottery Fund. **For more information, see the Healthy Transitions toolkit available here:** <http://foyer.net/what-we-do/publications/>
- **Healthy Conversations**, a two year programme that was initiated in 2013 to build on the learning from Healthy Transitions, also funded by The Big Lottery Fund.
- **Change Your Mind About Young People**. Funded through the Department of Health - Volunteering Fund, this 3 year pilot programme began in 2012 in partnership with Tyneside Mind and Youth Focus North East (previously Regional Youth Work unit).

How to use this guide

This pack has been designed with two key purposes in mind:

- 1 **To give you an in-depth understanding of the values, philosophies and strategies that underpin the Foyer Federation's approach to health.**
- 2 **To be a practical resource that delivery staff can use to get going with the activities quickly.**

On the contents page and throughout the pack, we have marked two different types of sections to help you make efficient use of the pack and decide which parts are relevant to you.



This symbol indicates that the section deals with values, philosophies and strategies. If you are looking for an in-depth understanding of the theory behind Healthy Conversations, you should plan to read through all of these sections.



This symbol indicates that this section focuses on practical delivery. If you require hands-on activities for delivery, skip straight to the sections with this label.

Additional Resources

The pack has been designed to be a practical and user friendly tool. As such, practice examples and complementary resources will be provided separately as digital resources. This will be available through the Foyer Federation website www.foyer.net.

The Foyer Federation also offers a suite of products for organisations to more effectively engage, harness and develop the talents of young people. You may find it beneficial to the success of your Healthy Conversations project or your organisation more generally to bolt on to Healthy Conversations additional Foyer Federation projects. For more information regarding these additional services, please contact the Foyer Federation directly: www.foyer.net; inbox@foyer.net.

The pack draws on the experiences of staff and young people from the Foyer Federation network who have been involved with Healthy Conversations. More information about our projects and the learning from our programmes can be found on the Foyer Federation website.

foyer.net/what-we-do foyer.net/what-we-do/publications



Introduction to Healthy Conversations

“ Let's talk about healthy living. ”



The Healthy Conversations Approach

Healthy Conversations takes an Advantaged Thinking approach to health. It empowers young people by focusing on their potential. It gives them the tools, understanding and networks to create positive change personally, with their peers, and within the wider community.

Healthy Conversations uses a model of leadership to take staff and young people on a journey through health. It works under the premise that when leadership is guided by values, the world and those around us will benefit. We encourage participants to 'be the change they wish to see in the world'. In order to do this, we equip them with:

Values:

A set of principles upon which they make their health decisions.

Intentions:

A desire to bring about positive change in the world around them based on their values.

Tools:

Activities, experiences and resources that help participants develop the skills they need to become effective health leaders.

Be:

All of these combined allow participants (both staff and young people) to Be 'Advantaged Thinkers' when it comes to health.



“ The ethos has to go through everything you do. We changed our support paperwork, changed our support sessions to fit. We've kind of transformed the way we work as a service. I think the legacy of Healthy Conversation will be the great work we've done building partnerships. It's taught us that there are lots of services wanting to achieve similar things and we can achieve more when we work together. ”

- Clare Birch
Learning and Development Worker
Bath Foyer

Values

We believe that everything we do in life and as a leader is based upon values. They inform our behavior and actions, and are the foundation of leadership. What underpins this guide is our values.

The values:



Advantaged Thinking brings health to life.



Mental health is something we all have; the problem is how we see it.



Health is a good life.



Young people should be part of the conversation about their health as active agents and not the passive recipients of strategies and services.



A healthy conversation is not a list of problems.



There is a threshold of 'life abilities' to build a healthy future.



A healthy conversation should challenge the discourse about young people.



Building a thriving life is not the same as helping someone to cope with an unhealthy life.

Everything in this guide is built with these eight values in mind. You can find more information about the values in section 2.



Intentions

When you are aligned with your values, that is, making decisions and actions with them in mind, your intentions are going to be right. When you are acting with the right intentions, then you are going to get better, more positive results. The intention of this guide is to equip members of staff with the tools and understanding to take an Advantaged Thinking approach to young people's health, and to influence positive change in the community. It is also designed to equip young people to develop their health and impact their community in a positive way. These intentions are built upon the eight values.

Specifically, the key intentions behind the Healthy Conversations approach are to support organisations to:

- **Help young people to develop the understanding and resilience to take responsibility for healthier life choices and approaches.**
- **Connect young people to a network of healthy opportunities.**
- **Engage young people in purposeful activity to achieve greater social interaction and health equality in their lives through the design, development and running of local community Health Action Projects.**
- **Develop staff's ability to coach young people through a range of health approaches.**
- **Bring health to life for staff as well as young people.**
- **Develop connections with other organisations and services.**
- **Create internal culture change through an Advantaged Thinking approach to health.**
- **Develop an increased understanding of, and ability to impact on, local health inequalities agendas.**

You can find more information about the intentions in section 3.

Tools

To maximise the benefit of your intentional actions, it's important to be using the right tools. Within this guide we have included a number of activities that cover 1:1 coaching, network building, and project planning. These activities will provide you with the tools to support young people to think about their health in a positive, Advantaged Thinking way.

You can find more information about the values in section 5.

Be

The synthesis of all of this, when your Values, Intentions and Tools are in alignment, is a way of "being". The use of this guide will support you and the young people you work with to take an Advantage Thinking approach to health.

You can find more information about "being" in section 5.



Why do we need Healthy Conversations?

An asset based approach to health

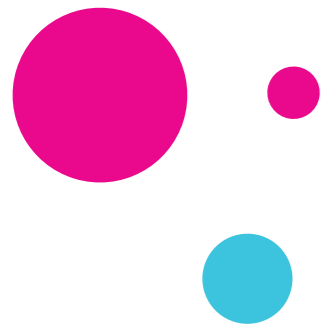
Our experience tells us that many youth and health services offer programmes and solutions that start from a 'deficit-based' model: young people are assessed in terms of what they lack, and the problems they face. As a result, support is more likely to be constructed to help them cope with that disadvantage rather than enabling them to develop their talents and assets.

Too many young people who experience challenges in their childhood and adolescence are seen through this lens of disadvantage. They tend to be picked up by services only when they are in crisis and services are increasingly expected to move them on as soon as their crisis is stabilised. Healthy Conversations is a different way of working with young people.

It is based on the fact that all young people have the talent and potential to live healthy, thriving lives and to support the health of their community. We believe that young people hold the ability to turn their experience of disadvantage and health inequalities into a positive solution that enables them to develop into flourishing adults.

“ The Foyer Federation challenges us all to think very differently about young people. Their 'Talent' 'Asset' and 'Advantaged Thinking' approach turns the usual problem solving approach to engagement on its head, and starts to encourage organisations to become investor/engagers of the young instead. ”

- Richard Holmes
Development and Quality Manager
Crewe Foyer.



Supporting a squeezed sector

Youth organisations have faced many challenges in recent years on account of vast cuts in public spending and pressure on services. As a result, many organisations are currently struggling to maintain the vital 'balanced community' of young people that fully supports their health potential. Statistics tell us that the number of young people not in education, employment or training has remained at a level of circa one million for the past decade.

Our own research with the Foyer Federation network has shown that the number of young people moving on from a Foyer and entering sustainable employment has been declining in recent years, compared to previous years. It has been argued that young people "have been the biggest victims of the cost of living crisis", and are disproportionately affected by an intergenerational pay gap¹.

These challenges affect young people's health. It is clear that young people, particularly those who have experienced poverty and/or homelessness, face health inequalities relating to healthy eating, physical activity and mental well-being. Healthy Conversations addresses these challenges. It takes an Advantaged Thinking approach to health: by focusing on making small investments, at the right time and in the right way; by believing in young people's potential; and by encouraging them to thrive rather than simply survive.

It is a holistic model, encompassing physical health, mental well-being, and healthy eating, and providing staff and services with the tools they need to support young people into flourishing, healthy lives. Participating in the programme enables young people to understand how health inequalities affect their ability to thrive, to take control of their own health outcomes, and to play a part in shaping healthier communities.

“ People think ‘how can this help? It’s just a conversation’, but it’s a bit more complicated than that. Lots of young people have opinions but many don’t have the platform to express those opinions, or to engage in constructive debate. These Healthy Conversations give them a platform. It encourages them to take responsibility and, in doing so, to gain the vital confidence and resilience to move forward in their lives. ”

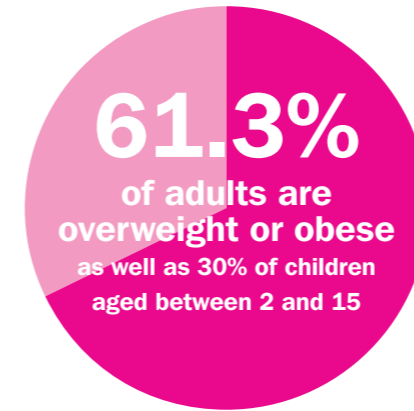
- Danny Fryer
Talent Agent, Gateway Family Services

¹ See The Intergenerational Foundation's report Squeezed Youth: The Intergenerational Pay Gap and the Cost of Living Crisis

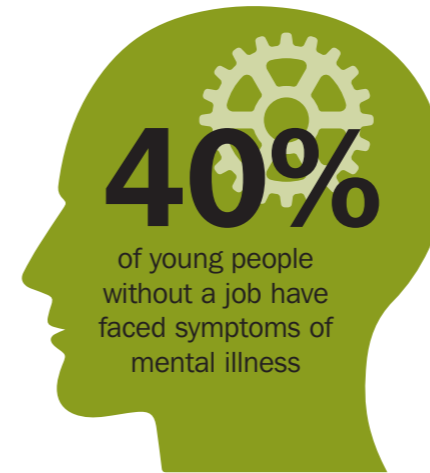
Understanding the health inequalities faced by young people

More details and references can be found in section 6.

Healthy Eating

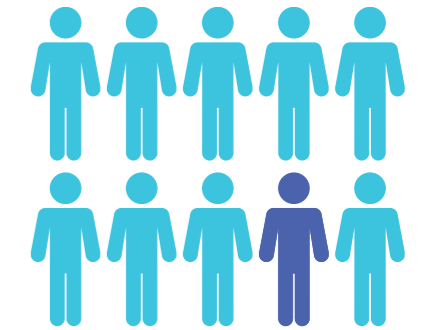


Eat 5 portions of fruit and veg a day
Consumption of five portions of fruit and vegetable by adults is lowest amongst those aged 16-24, compared to 24% of men and 29% of women overall.



Poor mental health is one the largest causes of disability in young people aged 16 - 25 in the UK

Mental Well-being

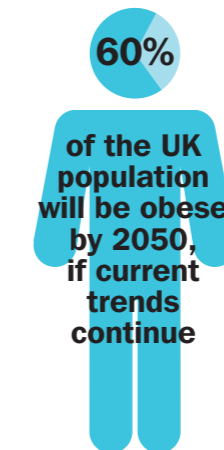


One in ten young people will face a mental health problem

Physical Activity

“ Unemployment may be falling in the UK, but persistent high levels of the number of young people over 18 not in employment, education or training is storing up a public health time bomb waiting to explode. ”

WHO review
Prof Sir Michael Marmot



Department of Health recommends that **adults aged 19-64 years take up to 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity every week.**
For young people aged 5-18, the Department recommends at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day

GO

What is a Healthy Conversation?



Conversations happen in all sorts of ways. We spend most of our lives in an internal conversation with one's self. Then there is the world outside us: how we interact with family and friends; with peers; with mentors, professionals and advisers; and with the wider community. Every conversation we have is an important process of learning and reaffirming beliefs. Our lives are shaped through the conversations we have.

People often experience the wrong health conversations. We tend to talk more about fixing and preventing illness than nurturing the vitality of our body and mind. We talk about responding to health messages when we should be making healthier choices. We complain about accessing the right health service instead of building the right health lifestyle. We focus on health problems, not health potential.

The negative, limiting beliefs these conversations build up over the years cannot be simply countered through one positive exchange. To begin a healthier conversation takes time, fresh experience, and social connection. Most of all, it requires trust in a personal commitment to change one's life through health.

All our conversations offer the opportunity to explore a healthier sense of well-being. 'Healthy conversations' are those that support people to find their own solutions. From the conversation with ourself, to the conversation with our community, we can all create the thinking and action for positive health. Healthy Conversations is about bringing health to life. In this section you will find a range of thought provoking questions and activities for you to start that journey within you, your staff team and wider organisation. You could even use them with young people.

So, what's your conversation about?



2 Healthy Conversations values

“ Life is not merely being alive, but being well. ”

Marcus Valerius Martialis



Introducing the 8 Healthy Conversations values

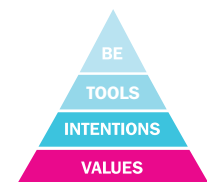
The Healthy Conversations approach includes 8 core values that look at healthier eating, physical activity and mental well-being. These values are a useful entry point into the programme and can be used to start conversations, underpin coaching sessions, and provide inspiration for group activities. They link together to produce the core Healthy Conversations vision of 'bringing health to life': making health something that is exciting and accessible for everyone.

“ I’ve become a lot more aware of even the basic things, like how I’m sleeping and how that affects my mental health. There are a lot of things you don’t think are to do with health, but are. The fact that we’re learning at the same time makes it easier to engage and involve people, which is a really useful skill to have. ”

– Daniel, young person

Value
 Advantaged Thinking brings health to life
 Health is a good life
 Healthy Conversation is not a list of problems
 A healthy conversation should challenge the discourse about young people
 Building a thriving life is not the same as helping someone to cope with an unhealthy life
 Mental health is something we all have; the problem is how we see it
 Young people should be part of the conversation about their health as active agents and not the passive recipients of strategies and services
 There is a Threshold of 'life abilities' to build a healthy future

This page provides a quick summary of the different values. Each value also has its own page with more in depth information.



Influence	Summary
Open Talent	Advantaged Thinking is all about taking a positive view through positive action. In Healthy Conversations, this means believing in the potential young people have to take control of their health, empowering young people to create and promote healthier lifestyles, and presenting young people in positive ways.
Aristotle, Greek Philosopher	What does it mean for you as an individual to live a good, healthy life? How can you build that life?
R D Laing, Scottish Psychiatrist	Health is not just a diagnosis of problems. Health is holistic and should look at who we are, what we want, how we behave, and what actions we take. We should ask “what do you want to achieve with your health?” rather than “what is wrong with you?”
Michel Foucault, French Philosopher	How can we challenge the negative stereotypes and false associations that contribute to an ‘unhealthy conversation’ about young people in the community? How can we create a more positive representation of young people?
Martin Seligman, positive psychologist	Many services and health approaches are based on helping someone to cope with a health problem. How can we help young people build the habits and behaviours associated with a flourishing life, instead of coping with a negative one?
Mental Health Awareness Week	Why is mental health associated with mental ill health? We all understand the importance of talking about and looking after our physical health – why can’t we do the same for mental health?
World café movement	There is a national and local conversation about improving people’s health. From TV chat shows to doctor’s surgeries and supermarket packaging, we are bombarded with health promotion messages. How can we make sure that young people’s experiences and opinions form part of the health solutions that are offered?
Guy Claxton, Educationalist	Thresholds are designed to capture and connect the little steps and outcomes that make up the patchwork of how young people learn and develop in their lives. The process empowers young people and the staff working with them to reflect on their journey, recognise when important ‘breakthroughs’ have been achieved, learn from failures, and understand how the different types of abilities they develop will influence their overall progress.



GO

Activities to help you understand the 8 values

We have found that engaging in practical activities around the values is one of the best ways to understand them fully.

We recommend running at least one of these activities with staff and young people at the beginning of your organisation's Healthy Conversations journey. The ideas, goals and themes that come out of these exercises can be useful starting or reference points for coaching and group activities.

Overview activity

All 8 values:



This activity is designed to help participants consider and evaluate the values in depth.

Break into small groups of 3 or 4. Each group has to rank the values in order of importance. Everyone then comes back together to compare how each group ranked the values. Why did they choose that order? What were the similarities and differences in ordering? Have any common themes emerged? Are there any 'right' or 'wrong' answers to this activity?

A positive approach to health

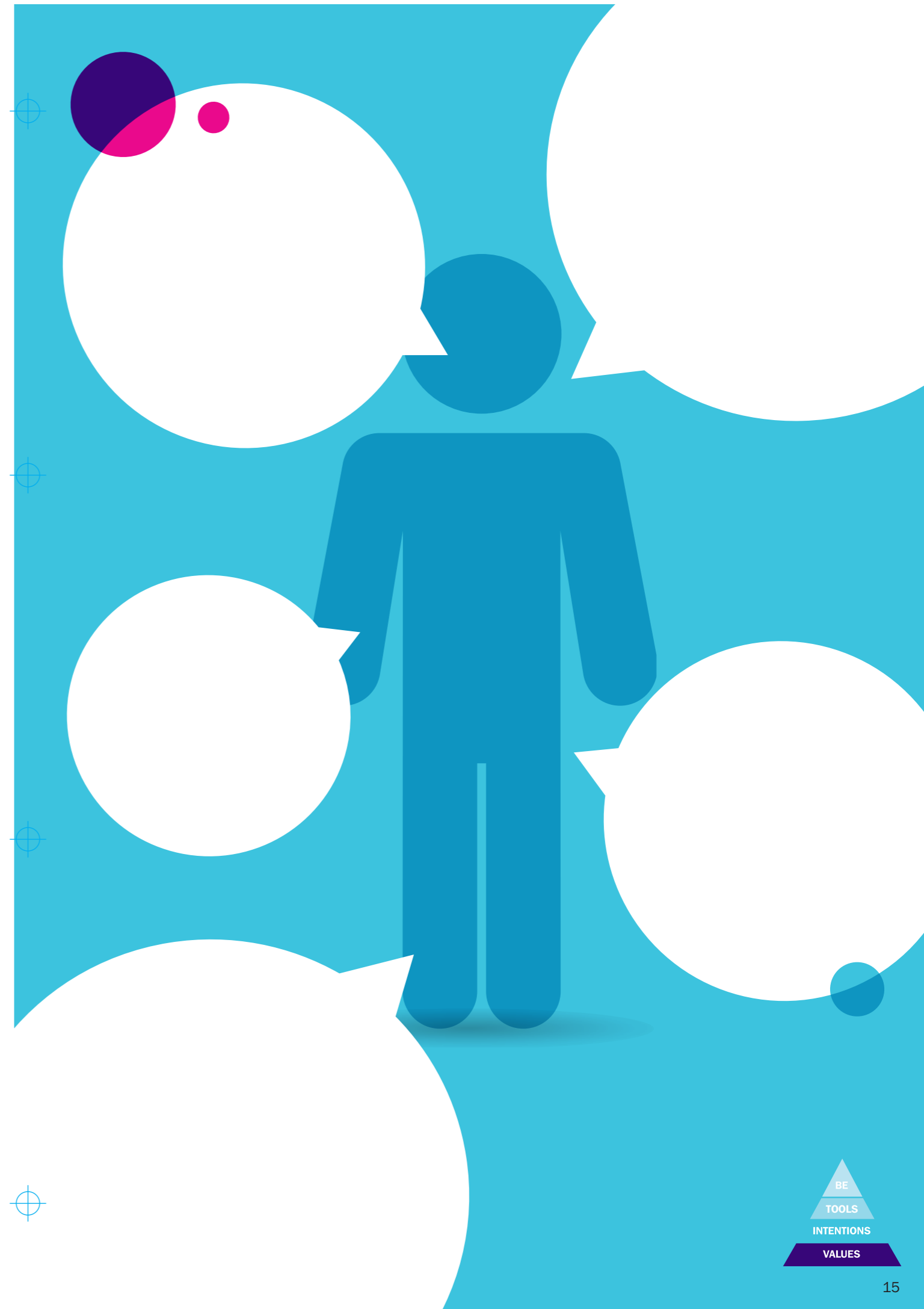
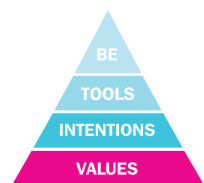
Values:



This activity is designed to approach life goals in a positive way. It focuses on talent and potential rather than barriers and problems. It also helps participants to think about what they want to achieve and how they might get there. It is particularly useful to introduce the Healthy Conversations coaching approach to staff.

Using the person outline template overleaf, consider the following questions:

- What do you love? What makes you happy? What matters to you in life? Write or draw the answers inside the person outline.
- What do you want to achieve, now and in the future? How do you want your life to look? Who or what do you want to be a part of it? Write or draw your answers inside bubbles around the person.
- What steps can you take to help you get there? Are there any changes you need to make? Who might help you? Write or draw your answers around the relevant bubble.





The 8 values in depth



Advantaged Thinking brings health to life

Influence: Open Talent

Advantaged Thinking is all about taking a positive view through positive action. Understanding ability, recognising qualities, promoting achievements, inspiring what is possible. Using the advantages we possess as humans to create and do new things.

In Advantaged Thinking, our needs, deficits and weaknesses are given a different focus by being connected to our goals, assets and strengths. Advantaged Thinking believes that taking positive action allows us to deal more effectively with the negatives in our lives. Advantaged Thinking believes that everyone has a talent.

With the right set of investments, we can identify and harness everyone's talent for personal and social good. As scouts, we work to find someone's talent; as coaches, we build and nurture that talent; and as agents, we promote talent potential. Advantaged Thinking is about building thriving lives by investing smartly in talent. Many people see health as a negative that either involves us doing things we don't want or dealing with problems we wish we didn't have. Instead, we need to see health as a positive force in our life. Being healthy is actually about being happy. A healthy lifestyle is something we create, it isn't something we are born with. If we are in control of our health then we are more likely to achieve the important things we want to do in life.

From a health perspective, Advantaged Thinking emphasises the potential young people have to take control of their health, the opportunity to empower young people to create and promote healthier lifestyles, and the importance of presenting young people in positive ways that prevents them from being negatively stereotyped and misunderstood. It also offers seven test areas which in a health context look at:

- 1 **The language we use to talk about young people's health.**
- 2 **The way we understand young people's health.**
- 3 **How we work with young people to promote their health.**
- 4 **How we invest resources in healthier lifestyles.**
- 5 **How we involve young people in creating their own health solutions.**
- 6 **What health outcomes we believe young people can achieve.**
- 7 **How we challenge ourselves and others to avoid negative, disadvantaged approaches.**



Health is a good life

Influence: Aristotle, Greek Philosopher

What does it mean for each individual to live a good, healthy life? Healthy conversations take place when we think, talk and act to shape the type of person and life we want for ourselves and our community. Our health, like our life, is wide ranging. It covers how we eat, how we are active, how we think and feel. How much of the conversation in your life is about health as a positive force that you can control?

- **'Our definition of a 'good life' has changed over time. In ancient Greece the 'good life' was called 'eudaemonia', (a state of human flourishing & happiness); in Italy, 'La Dolce Vita' (the sweet life). What is our interpretation today?**
- **How can we focus more of our time and energy on building a healthy life, rather than seeing health as something we only think about when we are ill or unhappy?**
- **How can a focus on health help us achieve our dreams and goals, and how can our dreams and goals help us be more healthy?**
- **Why do we think and talk about health prevention, when we should think and talk more about health creation?**



A Healthy Conversation is not a list of problems

Influence: R D Laing, Scottish Psychiatrist

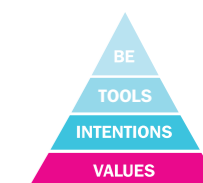
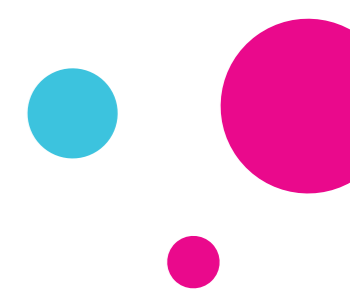
Why should our true health be assessed using a tick list of problems, needs, behaviours and deficits that suggest there is always something wrong with us?

There is no human being in existence without a mental or physical health challenge; but we continue to assess people's health against a list of negatives that suggest a normal human being is one who has no problems, needs, difficult behaviours or deficits. We look to find out what is wrong with someone in order to focus on that as the key to their health.

This limited approach to understanding ourselves does little to help us recognise the complexities that make up a healthy human life. Nor is a tick list of problems the best way to stimulate positive mental well-being.

Healthy Conversations seek to find out what is right with us, to understand how and why we do and feel things in certain ways. Health is not just a diagnosis of problems. Health is also a diagnosis of who we are, what we want, how we behave, and what actions we take. Health is what we do know and don't know about living a flourishing life. Our health depends on the challenges that hold us back from being who we want to be, and the responsibilities we can take to address the things we want and ought to do.

Where does the key to your future health lie?



Health is part of the discourse of power

Influence: Michel Foucault, French Philosopher

The world we live in is constructed through a series of different narrative discourses or ‘conversations’. Each conversation seeks to promote a set of beliefs that form what is accepted as natural and given in our society – the establishment or status quo view.

By their nature, these conversations are also about discourses of power. They sometimes serve to identify and exclude specific social groups in ways that justify the power of a particular establishment force or status quo belief.

Every social and political act can thus be seen as a conversation that seeks to express a form of power and promote a world view at the potential cost of someone else. As such, each conversational act can be decoded to reveal its method and purpose of narrative construction. This allows the potential to disrupt and oppose those negative conversations that target young people in ways that stigmatise and discriminate against them.

The conversation about young people living in Foyers and other support services is often filtered through a language that directly associates them as being the agents of their own problems: they are more likely to be talked about as feckless, benefit cheats, substance misusers and abusers, lazy, out of control, and disinterested in their community, than other groups of people who actually replicate these behaviours. Compare, for instance, how alcohol use among University students is more socially acceptable than among young people of the same age living in supported or social housing projects.

There is an accepted discourse about ‘socially excluded young people’ that is both unhealthy in its negative stigmatisation and unhelpful in its inability to target the positive solutions required to enable their thriving life.

If we are to create a healthy conversation with and about young people, we must change the current conversation in which young people’s health challenges and opportunities are not adequately understood or acted upon. How do we stand up to the negative stereotypes and false associations that contribute to an ‘unhealthy conversation’ about young people in the community? How can we construct a more positive discourse?

Building a thriving life is not the same as helping someone to cope with an unhealthy life

Influence: Martin Seligman, positive psychologist

Many services and health approaches are based on helping someone to cope with a health problem; to react to and eradicate the ‘effects’ of ill health that are often caused by different choices in our lives. A culture of remedial medication, though, does not necessarily make us healthier or happier if it does not also address how we create the personal conditions for a flourishing life. How much we focus on the latter has a powerful impact on our likelihood to shape a positive future. Services working directly with young people more prone to ill health effects must therefore take a lead in shaping the conditions by which an individual is more likely to thrive. These conditions include the ability to think positively, to be able to laugh and smile, to take responsibility for our actions, to reflect on what makes us happy, to be resilient, and be mindful about our bodies and minds.

What is the culture of active ‘posi-cation’ (no just remedial medication) that can help someone build the habits and behaviours associated with a flourishing life?

Mental health is something we all have; the problem is how we see it

Influence: Mental Health Awareness Week

Every May we celebrate Mental Health Awareness week. Part of the celebrations include well known people ‘coming out’ to talk about mental health problems that they have experienced or are experiencing in their lives. But the phrase ‘mental health’ does not necessarily equate to having a problem. We all have mental health.

Why is mental health associated with mental ill health? When we hear the term ‘physical health’, we do not always think of physical illnesses as we seem to do with mental health. To have mental health has become a negative stereotype. It is a problem to get over rather than something we ought to develop. We are comfortable at talking about physical health and the things we do to get fit. But we are less familiar with talking about our mental health and the things we do to increase mental well-being.

Mental health carries a stigma in our society. We are more likely to sympathise with someone having a broken leg than someone who has depression; we are more likely to associate joining the gym with getting healthier than joining a reading group – even though the latter’s social contact and discussion of emotional feelings might have a more profound impact on mental well-being. We don’t talk enough about the things we do and can do to feel happier, to think positively, to be resilient, to nurture a comfortable and strong mental state.

Look at any high performance sport. You will notice that successful individuals and teams spend significant resources on developing the mental attributes to win. They invest in mental health and mental well-being as something that needs to be nurtured in just the same way that a body needs to be trained to be fit. Shouldn’t we do the same?

Young people should be part of the conversation about their health as active agents and not the passive recipients of strategies and services

Influence: World café movement

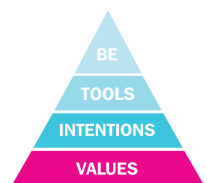
There is a national and local conversation about improving people’s health. From TV chat shows to doctor’s surgeries and supermarket packaging, we are bombarded with health promotion messages.

Each local authority will have its own ‘health inequalities strategy’, directing resources to address identified inequalities associated with health topics such as smoking cessation, teenage pregnancy, obesity, substance misuse, etc. What role do young people who are facing health inequalities have in this conversation? Where is their voice in shaping the messages, services and choices needed to impact on their lives?

We know that young people living in Foyers and other supported housing services face multiple health inequalities; but they have little understanding or access to the strategies that are meant to deal with these challenges. The health conversation is often limited to ensuring young people have access to available provision, rather than young people also playing a greater role to shape what provision is available.

How can the conversation be changed so that young people’s experiences form part of the solution to local health inequalities?

How can we enable young people to become active agents to create healthier lives for themselves and their communities?



There is a Threshold of 'life abilities' to build a healthy future

Influence: Guy Claxton, Educationalist

There are many interpretations of what a healthy life consists of and how it can be described.

We can think of a healthy life in terms of a certain level of nutrition, physical activity, mental well-being, and other positive assets. These should enable someone to function with a degree of personal control and social connection. A thriving adult is able to construct their life through these ingredients. Part of that process of construction includes developing different types of cognitive behaviour or 'life abilities' which enable an individual to learn and take action.

Talent Thresholds are ways to explore and track how young people make their transition towards a thriving adulthood. The Thresholds identify key 'transition points' or 'gates' which young people need to pass through in order to develop the skills, resources and opportunities (or 'assets') that will enable them to succeed in mainstream society.

While traditional measurements tend to focus on larger outcome areas, Thresholds are designed to capture and connect the little steps and outcomes that make up the patchwork of how young people learn and develop in their lives.

Part of the Thresholds process is to empower young people and the staff working with them to reflect on their journey, recognise when important 'breakthroughs' have been achieved or learning points from failures, and understand how the different Threshold areas will influence progress.

The Thresholds are:

- **Identifying positives** – The young person is able to identify positive strengths, goals and opportunities.
- **Showing commitment** – The young person is able to identify, make, and follow through on commitments to positive challenges and activities.
- **Maximising Experience** – The young person is able to take advantage of new experiences to develop skills, resources, opportunities, and future learning.
- **Promoting yourself** – The young person is able to communicate positive strengths, experiences, skills, etc, to a range of audiences.

These translate into four Healthy Conversations Threshold questions:

- 1 **How are young people able to identify positive and negative health behaviours and choices, and reflect on these to improve their approach to living a healthy life?**
- 2 **How are young people able to commit to positive health choices and behaviours, and build the mental resilience to sustain commitments to living a healthy life?**
- 3 **How are young people able to take advantage of different opportunities to develop their health, and utilise their resourcefulness to navigate any challenges?**
- 4 **How are young people able to express a healthy identity, promote positive health messages and choices to others, and influence the health of their community?**

3

Intentions: The structure of the programme

“ Conversation is a meeting of minds with different memories and habits. When minds meet, they don't just exchange facts: they transform them, reshape them, draw different implications from them, and engage in new trains of thought. Conversation doesn't just reshuffle the cards: it creates new cards. ”

Theodore Zeldin

Overview

“ To sum up Healthy Conversations, the three words I would say are life changing, gaining skills and breaking social barriers. Good health means everything really, coz if you don't look after yourself then how are you supposed to crack on with your job and crack on with your day to day life? ”

Jake, young person

The intention of Healthy Conversations is to use Advantaged Thinking approaches to take young people on a journey through the four life ability Thresholds (identifying positives, showing commitment, maximising experience, and promoting yourself).

There are three key elements of the programme that a young person can get involved with: 1:1 coaching, building a network, and taking action in the wider community. There is potential for a young person to pass through all four thresholds within each stage; but the experience will be most effective if a young person participates in every element of the programme.

The chart below shows the different activities and tools that are involved in each stage.

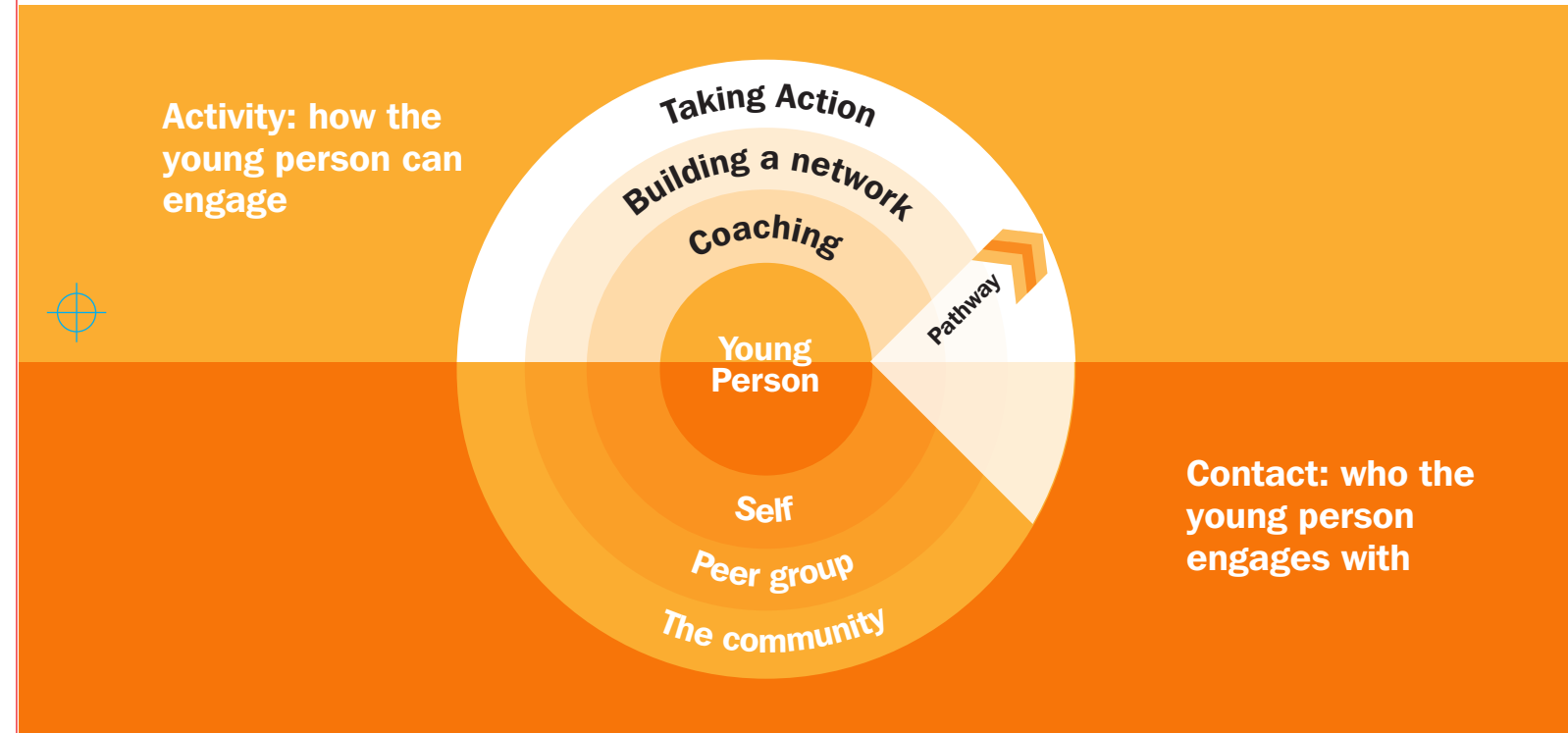
Elements	1:1 Coaching	Building a network	Taking Action
Activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Setting and progressing health goals 2 Creating plans to support goal progression 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Peer networking through Conversation Groups 2 Trying new activities at Taster Events 3 Connecting to people and organisations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Sharing opinions and spreading the message through one-off activities 2 Regular participation and contributions to support health projects and messages 3 Leading change through projects and youth forums
Tools for young people	Each young person has a workbook containing all their tools. On the front there is a cover sheet that tracks & summarises their progress.		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Conversation Card 2 Action Plan 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 My activities 2 My Health Connections 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 My activities
Tools for staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Conversation Card 2 Action Plan notes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Activity Card & attendance list 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Activity Card & attendance list 2 Influencing Card 1 3 Influencing Card 2



Pathways for young people

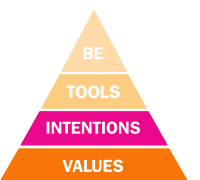
As explained in the previous section, Healthy Conversations is made up of three spheres of engagement. These spheres are designed to be flexible, meaning that a young person could join in at any stage and leave at any stage.

Spheres of engagement



The standard pathway through Healthy Conversations is shown in the diagram above. The young person is not obliged to follow this pathway: if they feel that they do not require coaching, for example, they could skip straight to the building a network or taking action stages.

Alternatively, they might move through the spheres in a different order. For example, a young person who finds 1:1 coaching challenging might find activities with their peer group a more accessible way to consider their own health and well-being. However, it is worth noting that the stages do affect and feed into each other. A young person who has not decided what their own health goals are would probably struggle to influence the local health agenda or spread health messages to the wider community. Moreover, participating in the coaching and peer group activities is designed to help young people to build the skills and confidence required to get involved with the Taking Action work.



Applying the Healthy Conversations values through the structure of the programme

Throughout all three stages of the programme, staff should remember the seven tests of Advantaged Thinking to ensure they are supporting young people to reach their full potential. The other values are also represented throughout the different stages as shown below.

1:1 coaching

The coaching element of the programme focuses on the young person as an individual. It draws on the following values:



The coaching conversation should start by encouraging young people to consider what matters to them and how they would like their life to be (See the second values activity in section 2.2).



Young people set positive goals based on their aspirations, rather than using problems as a starting point.



Mental health goals are built into the structure of the programme, and should be of equal weight to other types of health goals.



Young people are given support to develop their own strategies to achieve their health goals through Action Planning techniques.

Building a network



Mental health is something we all have; the problem is how we see it – young people are encouraged to talk about mental health with their peers, and are given access to health activities that promote positive mental health.



Young people should be part of the conversation about their health as active agents and not the passive recipients of strategies and services – young people are given the opportunity to develop and express their thoughts on topics that matter to them through Conversation Groups. The ideas that are raised in these groups are then translated into activities at Taster Events.



Building a thriving life is not the same as helping someone to cope with an unhealthy life – young people develop a peer support network through Conversation Groups. They are introduced to a wide range of healthy lifestyle options at Taster Events. Finally, they are supported to make new connections that will support them with their goals. Together, these activities form a base from which young people can build a thriving life within their local community.

Taking Action



Young people should be part of the conversation about their health as active agents and not the passive recipients of strategies and services – young people actively engage with services through activities such as surveys or participation events. Health Action Projects are designed, delivered and led by young people.



A healthy conversation should challenge the discourse about young people – all Health Action Projects should include an element of engagement with the wider community. Moreover, taking action enables young people to engage with professionals at a range of external services. This gives young people the opportunity to promote positive messages about themselves, their work, and health in general.

Please refer to page 12 for the values overview.

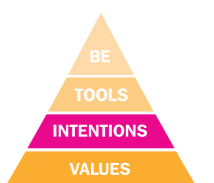
GO

Are you ready for Healthy Conversations?

To be successful, Healthy Conversations requires commitment from the organisation and staff, as well as the young people. The checklist below explains the key elements you will need to have in place.

Checklist

Values and attitude	<input type="checkbox"/> The organisation and staff must have the willingness and ability to embrace the 8 values, in particular Advantaged Thinking.
Appropriate staffing - These roles could be part time and one person could take on multiple roles. You also may have several people in the same role.	<input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Conversations lead – preferably from within your Senior Management Team. This person should set the strategy for implementing Healthy Conversations and ensuring the desired outcomes are met. They will champion the Healthy Conversations values. <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Conversations coordinator – someone who will be involved in the day-to-day management of the programme. This person will deal with logistics, such as organising events and creating the paperwork system. <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Conversations coach(es) – the coaches are responsible for delivering the 1:1 sessions and group activities.
Time commitment	<input type="checkbox"/> Preparation time will be required to train staff, plan the launch, and integrate the paperwork into your current system. <input type="checkbox"/> There is no set timeframe for Healthy Conversations. However, if you want to run all three elements of the programme, we have found that a year is a good timescale within which to plan, embed, and deliver the programme.
Youth Involvement	<input type="checkbox"/> We recommend that you involve or set up a Youth Steering Group to ensure that young people's voices are represented at all levels of the project.





Tools: Delivering the programme

“ Health is the thing that makes you feel that now is the best time of the year. ”

Franklin P. Adams

4 Tools: Delivering the programme

GO

Explaining the activities

Healthy Conversations embeds core tools and activities within the practice of your service to support the transformation of your health and well-being offer for young people. Within this section the activities and tools will be explained in more detail. All tools are also available as a digital resource and can be completed by hand or on a computer.

Coaching a Healthy Conversation

Activities

- **Setting and progressing health goals with Conversation Cards.**
- **Creating Action Plans to support goal progression.**

The coaching tools are used to support young people to set and achieve their health goals. The Conversation Card is designed to support young people to embed their health goals within a wider life context. Progressing goals into an Action Plan enables long-term change and the potential to review progress in depth. The ideas and themes that are developed through the coaching activities should be used to help inspire Taster Events, Conversation Groups and Health Action Projects.



The Coaching Approach

Coaching is a technique that enables young people to take control of decisions and develop a positive conversation about health with their self, staff worker and social network. It empowers young people to be aware of their thinking and behaviour, set personal goals and take responsibility for actions. Coaching enables young people to sustain long-term health and well-being choices by building the confidence and resilience to affect positive change.

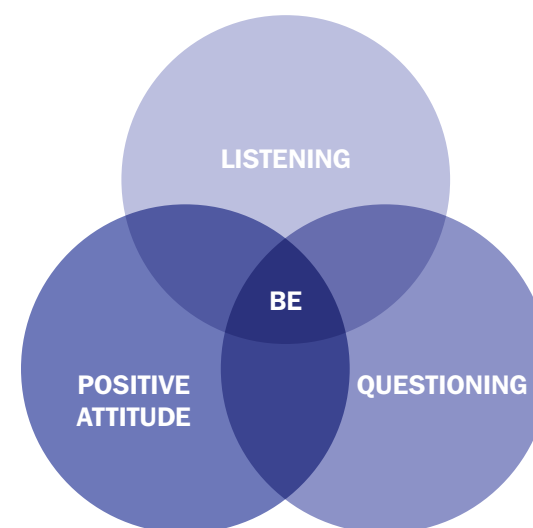
“Your beliefs become your thoughts, Your thoughts become your words, Your words become your actions, Your actions become your habits, Your habits become your values, Your values become your destiny.”

Mahatma Gandhi

Our definition of coaching is:

“Conversations with purpose that raise awareness and responsibility (response ability) around participants’ core values and aspirations in a health context.”

Our coaching approach sits on the simple yet deep foundations of a ‘positive attitude’, ‘listening’ and ‘questioning’. It is a coach’s purpose to help participants to find new ways of looking at things, and cope with challenges, all in line with what really makes them tick – their core values.



We believe that by working with using these ‘coaching fundamentals’ people can access a level of awareness, empowering them with a response ability to lead a values based life.

Listening

We’ve all had that moment where, after turning through several pages of a book, we suddenly realise we haven’t any idea of what we just supposedly read. We saw the words on the pages, but we didn’t actually take the time to process them mentally. In other words, there is a difference between seeing and reading. Seeing happens as long as your eyes are open. It is a passive biological process. But reading requires you to exert some brainpower. It is an active process of making meaning. When it comes to listening, we have a tendency to look at the words but never really “read” what our family, friends, and co-workers are saying.

“Now I am working I can support my family. I set winning Employee of the Month as a goal. I won that and went on to win Employee of the Year. Working towards goals and recognising my achievements makes me feel healthy.”

Shaun, young person

As a coach it is important to practice great listening, starting with the self and extending to others. Coming from a place of listening, coaches are able to be present to the moment and respond accordingly.

Our coaching approach explores three levels of listening:

Level 1—Internal listening

This level is about being aware of the internal monologue that goes on in your own head. You might be preoccupied by your own worries, thinking about what to have for lunch, or how much fun you had at the weekend. When you are listening internally it is difficult to give your full attention and energy to someone.

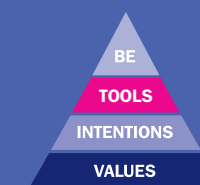
Level 2—Focused listening

This level is about giving your full, undivided attention to someone, and listening to everything they are, and aren’t, telling you. You hear the words they are saying and you register them and are able to recall and reflect back to the participant what they have just said. Here you are listening openly and without bias from a place of Positive Attitude and Questioning.

Level 3—Global listening

This is a wider level of listening which concentrates on the energy of a client or group. It’s like walking into a room and instantly noticing there is a good or bad ‘vibe’. You can use this level of listening to read between the lines of what a participant might say and what they might actually mean. What it is that their words aren’t telling you? In group situations, this level of listening is used to pay attention to the energy in the room and what it’s telling you about how a session is going.

Don’t be afraid to change things up if your Level 3 Listening tells you so!



Questioning

In our coaching approach, coaches use powerful, simple and open questions to nurture leadership and raise awareness in participants.

Simple Questions

Simple questions are best as they are easier to understand and won't leave the participant feeling confused. You should also avoid double-barrelled questions, or asking two questions in one. The more simple the question, the easier the participant will find it to reflect on what they are being asked.

Open Questions

Open questions usually start with 'Who', 'What', 'Where', 'Why' and 'How?'. Open questions allow the participant to answer honestly without being 'lead down a path' by their coach. Avoid asking closed questions like 'Don't you think that...' or 'Wouldn't you say...', where the participant might feel like there is a specific answer they should give. It is important for the coach to remain unattached to the outcome and the answers the participant will give.

What?

'What?' is very powerful as it focuses the question from the outset and sets intention or action. Questions like 'What is your goal?' or 'What steps do you need to take?' enable the participant to give very specific and focused answers that lead to action.

Positive Attitude

Positive attitude underpins all of our coaching approach. You must both listen and question with a positive attitude. Questioning with a negative attitude can disempower a participant, whilst listening with a negative attitude can be reflected in the questioning you use. In our coaching approach, we aim to model the way of 'being' that we want our participants to adopt. This is characterised by an overall optimistic and positive attitude.

The Coach's Role

It is important for both the participant and the coach to understand the coach's role.

A coach's role is not:

- To be authority figure or a friend but somewhere in-between.
- To get involved in the game itself as a 'player'.

A coach's role is:

- To get to know the participants, beyond any issues or challenges, focusing instead on their capabilities and positive attributes.
- To support participants to develop new awareness around themselves and their values.
- To support participants to identify meaningful and positive goals/action steps where appropriate.
- To gain 'permission' from participants to coach and challenge them towards their leadership development.
- Remain unattached to outcomes yet fully present.
- To facilitate an environment of leadership, self-reliance, resilience and resourcefulness.
- Maintain confidentiality within the remit of safeguarding and child protection.

Gaining Permission to coach

It is important to gain permission from participants to enter into coaching conversations with them. Imagine you are going for a run in the park, and someone starts running along beside you. They then proceed to start offering advice, posing difficult questions, and challenging you to improve your performance. "Run faster!" they shout. Your reaction is defensive, and you don't appreciate the support, even if they might have something useful to say.

The reason is that they don't have "permission" to coach you. In much the same way someone you are coaching will only respond to coaching support if they have given you the "permission" for you to coach them. This can be achieved relatively simply, by requesting it and negotiating the terms before offering coaching support. If you spot that a young person has retracted their "permission" then is your job to regain it by re-negotiating.

Building a Network

“Healthy Conversations has given me a chance to share my skills with others at the Foyer, and try new activities. Before attending sessions I was shy. Now I have loads of confidence and am making new friends at the Foyer.”

– Hannah, young person

Conversation Group

Activities

- Peer networking through Conversation Groups.
- Trying new activities at Taster Events.
- Connecting to people and organisations.

A Healthy Conversations Group is a regular meeting, event or forum where young people can informally explore any of the eight Healthy Conversations values through conversation and interaction. It is not necessarily or always 'health-specific'; it should use young people's life issues and interests as an opportunity to promote a Healthy Conversations approach.

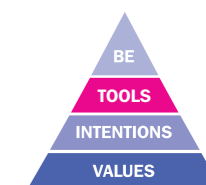
It is a facilitated group, with someone acting as the lead to encourage discussion and reflection, draw connections, and promote positive health messages. The lead facilitator is someone who will need to be skilled at facilitating discussions and should know the Healthy Conversations values well enough to be able to steer conversations.

A key aim for the group is to offer participants regular peer-to-peer support as part of a positive social network that can be sustained in a service.

The importance of the group as a place to offer positive connection in a shared community is a vital ingredient of Healthy Conversations.

It should be a platform for people to access information and find out about available advice on health topics that interest them – for example, by hosting guest speakers and services to run specialist sessions. It should also offer access to opportunities whereby young people can experience different health approaches through Taster Events, and can get involved in 'Taking Action' to improve the health and well-being of the local community.

The forum might be set up from scratch to add to a service's timetable of activities; or its focus might be integrated into an existing group or groups where young people are able to participate together. The most important thing is that the forum, in whatever shape, is facilitated, encourages active debate, and explicitly draws on the eight routes to healthy eating, physical activity and mental well-being to promote positive health messages.



Guidelines for a Conversation Group

- It should explore health topics in an engaging and enjoyable manner. A key aim is to encourage young people to become more involved in approaches to health in their service and community: these groups should spark their interest. Interactive activities can be used to stimulate discussion.
- It should be used to develop a peer network within your service: young people should be encouraged to interact and support each other through the groups.
- It creates starting points for other conversations about health related topics. For example, a weekly breakfast club could be a starting point for discussions such as healthy eating, sleeping patterns, and hygiene.
- It helps young people to develop their understanding of health approaches. It develops young people's capacity to identify, explore and adopt health solutions, and to learn about their impact. It opens up young people's awareness of local health services and opportunities.
- It should feed into the other activities. The group provides a forum (and inspiration) for young people to put forward ideas for the Taster Events and their own personal health goals. It should also expand young people's understanding of what health inequalities are in their community and how to help solve them, thus feeding into Health Action Projects.

Supporting your Conversations Group

Support for a group could include:

- A designated staff member or volunteer to facilitate the sessions.
- Marketing materials to engage young people.
- Healthy refreshments.
- External speakers and agencies.
- Health promotion materials.
- Relevant activities and stimulus resources.
- A process to capture and report back on what the group discusses.

Examples of Conversation Groups

- Bristol Foyer held a conversation group focusing on physical health, where they got residents to do a quiz, which created a lively discussion around what they each thought physical health was. They then went to a local bouldering site where they had the chance to get some physical exercise and were taught various climbing skills.
- Peterborough Foyer had a guest speaker come in and deliver a very powerful talk on his experience with drug use. This served as the starting point for a discussion on the impact of taking drugs and how to get support around this.
- Doncaster Foyer held a healthy sleep session where they made a makeshift bedroom and everyone wore their pyjamas. Each resident received a better sleep goodie bag and talked about how they could improve their sleeping habits.
- Doncaster Foyer also had a 'Junk food club' where they had people come into the Foyer and teach the residents how to make healthier alternatives to junk food, such as homemade pizza. This opened a dialogue about healthy eating.
- Newhaven Foyer used Graffiti art to open Healthy Conversations with residents. Each resident was given the opportunity to create a piece of artwork to help make their room more homely and experience the therapeutic benefit that art can have on health and well-being. This also helped residents to unlock artistic talents that they may not have been aware of.
- Other Healthy Conversation topics have included: bullying, self-talk, internet safety, budgeting, assertiveness, sexuality, NHS services etc.

For additional resources for conversation groups see Appendix 4 and for further ideas see Appendix 5.

“ I have attended lots of Healthy conversations events, My favourite was the sensory room visit at the children's centre. Healthy Conversations has supported me to understand health is not just about eating fruit and exercise. It's about being happy and looking forward to the future. I want to work with disabled children and make sure that my own children are well looked after and have all the things they need. ”

Georgina, young person

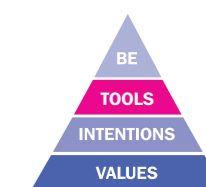
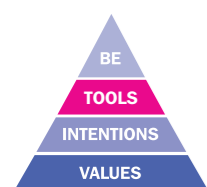
Taster Events

Health Taster Events provide an opportunity to promote positive health messages and choices to the young people at your service through interactive health activities. Crucially, they enable a young person to experience a variety of different health approaches and find one or more approaches that work for them.

The events are a great opportunity to provide access to activities that young people have previously not considered or been aware of; that they have not had the confidence to try previously; or that might otherwise be inaccessible due to distance, time or cost. A Taster Event can be any length of time and should be inspired by the ideas of the young people in your service.

Taster Events can further be used to:

- Engage young people in testing things they have not tried before.
- Provide inspiration to change mind sets, boost confidence and mental well-being.
- Increase interest and participation in Healthy Conversations.
- Introduce new services and activities that young people can benefit from as part of their Healthy Conversations connections.
- Develop partnerships for the service to maximise.
- Promote a healthy conversations campaign.
- Increase the service's profile as a provider and broker of health solutions.
- Develop lasting partnerships and relationships.



Examples

- A group of young parents and their children from Basildon Foyer went to experience a state of the art 'sensory room'. This was a relaxing experience for the group, it made them realise how important their senses were, and highlighted how it is crucial for their kids to be aware of their senses to aid their development.
- Bristol Foyer held a well-being day, where a range of external agencies came to the Foyer and set up stands showcasing what they can offer young people. This gave the young people the opportunity to sign up for different health services such as the local gym.
- Newhaven Foyer arranged a Dutch exchange programme, which saw them host residents from a Dutch Foyer. In return Newhaven residents had the opportunity to travel abroad and learn about each other's lives and countries. The residents learnt many skills in preparing for travel, taking on new challenges and taking part in some interesting workshops.
- Step by Step held a taster event at 'Gate Crash', an interactive theatre experience being performed at their local arts centre. This experience put clients outside of their comfort zone and challenged them to experience something new. They gained confidence through taking part in acting and dancing as part of the performance.

For additional Taster Event ideas see Appendix 5.

Health Connections

Throughout their time on the programme, young people are encouraged to develop a list of current and potential 'Health Connections'.

Identifying and expanding the number of services and organisations we are connected to can play a key role in maintaining and improving mental, physical and nutritional well-being. This process is designed to facilitate the conversation about a young person's health network and help them to identify future connections. Remember, services, groups and organisations that impact on our health and well-being don't have to just be statutory.

For a list of example Health Connections that might benefit young people, refer to Appendix 6.

“ The connection work is proving very positive as these are allowing individuals to reconnect with services they require but also the services they hadn't thought of. A success has been that a resident has re-engaged with ourselves and external services to address his alcohol consumption. He is now not drinking and his lifestyle has massively improved. His risk has now decreased from being on a HRMP for several months and is now currently low-med risk. ”

Mayday trust quarterly report



Taking Action

After undertaking coaching and some of the group activities in this guide, young people may feel that, as Advantaged Thinkers, they are impassioned to Take Action.

Activities

- **Sharing opinions and spreading the message through one-off activities.**
- **Regular participation and contributions to support health projects and messages.**
- **Leading change through projects and youth forums.**

This enables them to have an impact on the health services and the health issues that affect them and other people in their community. In Healthy Conversations, Taking Action is a form of social action, with a health focus. Social action can broadly be defined as practical action in the service of others, which is: carried out by individuals or groups of people working together; not mandated and not for profit; done for the good of others - individuals, communities and/or society; bringing about social change and/or value.

There are a number of ways young people can participate and have their say. The levels of participation below demonstrate the different ways a young person may choose to participate. It is likely that young people may want to start their journey at Level 1 and progress through each level, however it is equally as possible for a young person to start Taking Action at Level 3, by leading a project for example.

Levels of Participation

Youth participation is the meaningful engagement of young people within opportunities where they can have a say in the decisions and actions that affect them, their lives and their communities.

Level 1 – young people feed into services

Individual feedback, completing surveys, participating in focus groups, attending one-off events

Level 2 – young people regularly contribute to services

Attending annual participation events, participating in projects

Level 3 – young people leading change

Leading Health Action Projects, membership in youth forums, involvement in governance

The young people within your service may already have ideas about the messages and opinions they want to share, the services and people they wish to influence, and the type of projects they would like to run. In addition to this, the coaching and network building activities have been designed to help generate ideas and topics that can feed into all three levels of Taking Action.

All three levels of Taking Action allow young people to influence and support the wider community. The definition of "wider community" is not prescriptive; it could cover:

- People within your organisation – for example, senior staff, or other young people who are not currently participating.
- Members of the public, such as local residents, young people's friends and family members, or an online community.
- External organisations such as a GP clinic or local charity.
- Local commissioners and decision-makers such as CCGs or MPs.

LEVEL 1

These activities provide young people with the opportunity to share opinions and spread health messages through one-off involvement. They provide an easy route for young people to engage and share their opinions. These opinions can in turn be used to make a difference internally and within the wider community.

LEVEL 2

This level looks for a more regular, sustained involvement. For example, young people might help to put on an event to share some of the messages that they have learnt from the programme, or get involved with a Health Action Project that has already been designed. Alternatively they might participate in a series of activities/ consultations without taking the lead. As before, their opinions and contribution will have an impact on the service and/or wider community.

LEVEL 3

Level 3 enables young people to take on a leadership role. For example, they may choose to lead a Health Action Project or take an active role in a forum to drive change within an organisation. Level 3 is more than just sharing opinions and messages, although this should be included. The focus is for young people to engage in purposeful activity to help achieve greater social interaction and health equality in their wider community.

“ I really enjoy the Healthy Conversations project, I’ve had opportunities to do things that I would never have done without being a foyer resident. I loved going to Greenwoods Spa for the launch of our Health Action project. I enjoyed because I was able to be part of planning the project I know it will be what residents will enjoy. Healthy Conversations is about living a healthy life, including happiness. The activities I have been involved in have made me realise fun doesn’t stop just because I’m a mum. When I’m happy so are my children. When my children are happy so am I. ”

Summer, young person

Where might young people want to Take Action?

There is mutual benefit in young people Taking Action in health services. By taking action in the services that affect them, young people create an environment that is more comfortable and provides the best service possible for themselves and other young people in their community. Participation in or leading a project may improve young people’s confidence and feeling of empowerment, whilst contributing to a service in their community may increase their feeling of connection to that community. It allows young people to become active citizens and gives them opportunities to thrive.

For health providers, young people’s involvement ensures that the service they are providing is the most relevant possible. Improving health services for young people will ensure that the services are accessed appropriately and thus reduce the number of people accessing inappropriate services, leading to down-the-line cost savings.

Young people may choose to Take Action within services that affect them or that they use as patients/service users. These services could include, but are not limited to:

- GPs
- Sexual Health Services
- Mental Health Services
- Foyers
- Young people’s VCS organisations

There are agencies who have a big influence on health services for all, including young people. These agencies may commission or regulate health services, or be involved in running multiple health services. Young people may want to link in with some of these agencies, or deliver a presentation to them on the health work that they have been undertaking.

- Healthwatch
- Public Health Teams
- CCGs
- Health and Well-being Board

For more information on successfully supporting young people to influence services and the wider community, including tips and ideas for setting up a Health Action Project, refer to Appendix 7.



Conversation Card – goals

What do you love? What are your talents?
What do you want to achieve?

You can use these questions to help you think about what your life goals are.

My life goals are to...

Goal number:

My health goal is to:



Type of goal (circle):

Physical health, mental health or healthy eating

Goal number:

My health goal is to:



Type of goal (circle):

Physical health, mental health or healthy eating

Goal number:

My health goal is to:



Type of goal (circle):

Physical health, mental health or healthy eating

Are there any people, groups or organisations who could help you achieve your goals?
Make sure you make a note of them in your Health Connections page.

Conversation Card – coaching session review

These notes will help you to remember what you talked about in the session, and will let you see how your well-being progresses over time.

Date of session

My coach today is

What will you take away from this session?

How do you feel after this session?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Date of session

My coach today is

What will you take away from this session?

How do you feel after this session?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Date of session

My coach today is

What will you take away from this session?

How do you feel after this session?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10





ACTION PLAN

What it is

The Action Plan is a resource to help the young person break each health goal down into small, achievable steps. One Action Plan should be used for each goal that the young person has identified and both the coach and the young person should take a copy with them at the end of the session.

How to use it

Below is a short guide on completing an Action Plan:

'Goal number' – Add the number of the goal that you are coaching the young person on here.

'Steps I need to take to make this goal happen' – It can be really helpful for a young person to break their goal down into specific steps that they need to take to make it happen. You can support them to recognise these steps by asking coaching questions. The steps that the young person identifies should be listed in this section.

'When will I do this?' – We all have things that we'd like to do but that we never seem to make the time for. It is really important to help the young person find a specific date and time that they can commit to working on each step and add it to their Action Plan.

'Do I need any items or equipment to help me?' – For some goals the young person may need to use additional items or equipment. For example, if a young person wants to cook fresh vegetables for their evening meal they may need specific kitchen utensils. Help them to think about what items they need and how they can access them, then write it in this box.

'Who could help me?' – Ask the young person to think about any people, groups or health organisations that could help them to achieve their goal. This could be a friend who can help to motivate them or a health service that can give them important information. Whether the young person has already made these connections or if they will need to make them in the future, they should be added to the Action Plan here.

'When will I review my progress?' – It's important that the young person is able to regularly assess their progress with their coach to celebrate their achievements and to identify any obstacles that they might need to overcome. You should agree when you will meet with the young person again to review their Action Plan and add the date here.

'Is there anything else I need to think about?' – This space is for the young person to note anything else that is important to their goal.

'Have I completed these steps?' – This section should be completed when you meet with the young person to review their Action Plan. You should discuss each step with the young person and ask them to add the date that they completed each step.

Action Plan notes for learnedes

Below is a list of questions that can help you coach a young person through an Action Plan.

Why do you want a health plan? What is your goal?

What healthy activities will help you to achieve this?

What things might you need in order to do this?

Who might help you?

What are the steps you need to take to reach your goal?

What are the check points to look out for along the way?

When do you plan to review your progress?

Action Plan

Goal number:

Steps I need to take to make this goal happen

- Step 1
- Step 2
- Step 3



When will I do this?	Do I need any items or equipment to help me?	Have I completed these steps? (add date below)	Who could help me? (people, groups, or organisations)
Step 1	Step 1	Step 1	
Step 2	Step 2	Step 2	
Step 3	Step 3	Step 3	
When will I review my progress?			Is there anything else I need to think about?



*also add the date you progressed this goal to your Cover Sheet. †don't forget to add these onto your Health Connections page. Healthy Conversations Workbook



ACTIVITY CARD

What it is

The Activity Card is designed to help you track the Healthy Conversations activities that are delivered throughout the programme. An Activity Card should be completed for every Conversation Group, Health Taster Event or Health Action Project activity that is delivered, and you may like to accompany it with photos and videos taken during the activities. You should also log the activities that each young person takes part in on their individual Cover Sheet.

How to use it

Here's how to fill in an Activity Card:

First off, specify the name, date and type of activity that you delivered at the top of the Activity Card.

'What did you do?' – Here you should give a brief description of the activity. Think about what happened, who took part and what the purpose of the activity was. You should also indicate if the activity focused on physical health, mental health or healthy eating. Some activities may focus on more than one area.

'Who has the activity helped?' – Identifying the number of people that the activity has helped will help you to demonstrate how much impact it has had. You should also think about the different types of people that the activity has helped – these may be young people, people from external agencies or members of the local community.

'How has the activity helped them?' – As well as identifying how many people the activity has helped, it's really valuable to capture how much each participant has been helped and in what way. This may include young people progressing their personal health goals.

'Are there any actions to be taken?' – After an activity has taken place there may be some tasks that need to be completed. For example, if a group of young people have a conversation about ideas for a Taster Event, someone may need to do some research to help make those ideas happen. You should note any actions here.

'Quotes from participants' – Taking direct quotes from attendees is a great way of capturing the impact of the activity. You may like to ask a range of attendees to describe how they've benefitted from the activity and include these on the Activity Card.

'Attendee list' – On this page you should record the personal details of everyone who took part in the activity. This will help you to track the different types of people who have interacted with the programme and the growth of your service's Healthy Conversations network. Collecting the personal details of the young people who took part will also help you to update their individual Cover Sheets later.

Activity Card

Activity name	Activity date	Type of activity (Conversation Group, Taster Event or Health Action Project activity)
What area of health did you focus on?		
Who has the activity helped?		
How has the event helped them?		
Are there any actions to be taken following on from this activity?		
Quotes from participants:		

Attendee list

(including staff/external agencies)

Name	Age	Type of attendee (e.g. young person, community member, external agency)	Contact details
			Phone:
			Email:
			Phone:
			Email:
			Phone:
			Email:
			Phone:
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INFLUENCING GROUP CARDS

What it is

The cards are designed to track young people's participation and ideas for Level 3 influencing activities.

How to use it

There are two different cards, both designed to be used by staff, but they could also be shared with young people.

- **Influencing Card 1** looks at health service improvement. It uses the Department of Health's "You're Welcome" framework to generate ideas for how a particular health service might improve its health offer for young people.
- **Influencing Card 2** looks at setting up a Health Action Project.

Using Influencing Card 1

In 2005 the Department of Health introduced You're Welcome, a quality criteria for young people friendly health services. You're Welcome sets out principles to help commissioners and health services to improve their offer for young people. These criteria can be used as a starting point for young people who might want to assess a health service.

'Service we would like to influence' – this could be a service or department within your own organisation, or an external health service where young people are users. Examples could include GPs or Sexual Health Services (see the "Taking Action" section for more detail)

'You're Welcome criteria' – The You're Welcome criteria can be used as guidance when young people look at health services in their area. As such, you should discuss which criteria the young people would like to address. They may choose to focus on just one, or look at several. **Criteria include:**

1 Involving young people in monitoring and evaluation	Young people are asked their opinions about a service and are given feedback from their suggestions and may be offered longer term, meaningful ways of being involved with the service.
2 Access	The service is easy to get for young people and finds ways of giving young people information about how to get there easily. The service is also accessible for all, including for those with additional access needs. Young people are offered the option of being seen alone.
3 Publicity	The service provides its patients with information about what it offers and how to access these services. Information is provided in a format that is clear and understandable for young people with additional needs and in languages used by the local community of young people.
4 Confidentiality and consent	The service acts in a way that prioritises confidentiality, consent and safeguarding and makes sure that young people understand their rights in regards to these areas.
5 The environment	The service looks and feels 'young person friendly' with safe, secure and comfortable spaces for young people to access their care.
6 Staff training, skills, attitudes and values	Staff are friendly and young people's rights and care are at the heart of the service. Staff have all of the right skills and attitudes to work with young people and have undergone appropriate training where necessary.
7 Joined-up working	The service advertises other relevant services for young people in the area and might signpost young people to these services when necessary. Similarly, the service is advertised in other relevant young people's services in the area.
8 Health issues for young people	The health needs of young people in their transition to adulthood are addressed. Relevant care is provided to young people depending on their health needs from universal issues affecting all young people to issues specific to young people who may have long-term health needs.

'What does the service do currently?' – how is the service you are choosing to influence already addressing the chosen criteria? What is missing?

'What improvements would you suggest?' – how do you feel that the service could become more friendly and helpful to young users?



Samples

In the following pages we have provided examples of how each tool might look when used in practice. It is important to remember that there are no right or wrong answers – the cards are simply designed to help track the Healthy Conversations journey.

Healthy Conversations Workbook Cover Sheet

My personal details

Name Aminah Qadir
 Date of birth 12th May 1997
 Ethnicity Pakistani
 Phone number 07333333333
 Email Aminah-Q@example.net

My health goals

Goal number	Type of goal (physical health, mental health or healthy eating)	Made Action Plan? (add date below)	Reviewed Action Plan? (add date below)	Goal progressed? (add date below)
1	Healthy eating	5th January 2015	19th January 2015	14th January 2015
2	Mental health	5th January 2015	12th January 2015	12th January 2015
3	Physical health	5th January 2015	12th January 2015	12th January 2015
4	Physical/Mental	12th January 2015	19th January 2015	17th January 2015
5	Healthy eating	19th January 2015	2nd February 2015	30th February 2015



Healthy Conversations Workbook Cover Sheet

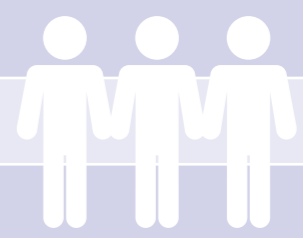
My activities

Activity joined (Conversation Group, Taster Event or Taking Action activity)	Date of activity	Which goals (if any) did it help with?
Breakfast Club Conversation Group.	6th January 2015	
Cooking Skills Taster Event.	14th January 2015	Goal number 1
Breakfast Club Conversation Group.	20th January 2015	



My Health Connections

Goal number	Connections I could make to help with this goal...	Have I made this connection?	Date of connection
1	My support worker.	Yes	5th January 2015
	My support worker.	Yes	6th January 2015
1	Professional chef delivering cookery classes at my Foyer.	Yes	14th January 2015
2	Gym.	Yes	9th January 2015
4	Online yoga tutorials.	Yes	13th January 2015
5	Market.	Yes	13th January 2015
6	Cookery course at college.	Yes	



Conversation Card – goals

What do you love? What are your talents?
What do you want to achieve?
You can use these questions to help you think about what your life goals are.

My life goals are to...

Move into my own flat and to have enough independent living skills to make it a success.

To develop my cooking skills and secure a job as a chef.

Goal number:

My health goal is to:

Attend cooking classes so that I can learn how to make healthier food on a budget.



Type of goal (circle):

Physical health, mental health or healthy eating

Goal number:

My health goal is to:

Go to bed two hours earlier 3 nights a week so that I am not so tired all the time.



Type of goal (circle):

Physical health, mental health or healthy eating

Goal number:

My health goal is to:

Start going to the gym for 2 hours twice a week to help me be more active and energetic.



Type of goal (circle):

Physical health, mental health or healthy eating

Are there any people, groups or organisations who could help you achieve your goals?
Make sure you make a note of them in your Health Connections page.

Conversation Card – coaching session review

These notes will help you to remember what you talked about in the session, and will let you see how your well-being progresses over time.

Date of session

My coach today is

5th January 2015

Susan

What will you take away from this session?

I have set three health goals with my coach and feel quite excited about working on them. My coach was really enthusiastic about my idea to become a chef which helped me to feel motivated to achieve my goals.



How do you feel after this session?



1 2 3 4 5 6 **7** 8 9 10



Date of session

My coach today is

5th January 2015

Susan

What will you take away from this session?

I did OK at my goals. I have gone to bed an hour earlier twice this week so, although I have not achieved my goal yet, I have made progress. I also tried a yoga class at the local gym which I really liked but I don't think I can afford to go every week. After a conversation with my coach I have decided to try doing it on my own by watching online tutorials.



How do you feel after this session?



1 2 3 4 **5** 6 7 8 9 10



Date of session

My coach today is

5th January 2015

Susan

What will you take away from this session?

I have been doing yoga at home and I love it! I found some great videos and I am definitely starting to feel more relaxed. I also took part in the Cookery Skills Taster Event and the tutor gave me some useful information about college courses in cookery. I feel more confident about cooking fresh food and definitely want to practice!



How do you feel after this session?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 **9** 10



Action Plan

Goal number: 1

Steps I need to take to make this goal happen

- Step 1** Speak to my support worker about when cooking classes will take place at my Foyer.
Step 2 Set an alarm for the date of the cooking class to make sure I am there on time.
Step 3 Be confident in trying out cooking ingredients I have not used before at the cookery class.



When will I do this?	Do I need any items or equipment to help me?	Have I completed these steps? (add date below).	Who could help me? (people, groups, or organisations)*
Step 1 5th January Step 2 The day before class Step 3 At the class	Step 1 No. Step 2 Alarm clock. Step 3 The ingredients and cooking equipment supplied at the cooking class.	Step 1 5th January Step 2 13th January Step 3 14th January	My support worker. Professional chef delivering cookery classes at my Foyer.
When will I review my progress?	Is there anything else I need to think about?		
In my next coaching session after the cooking class - 19th January 2015.	To ask the professional chef delivering the class about food that I can afford to make on my budget. I also want to find out more about how they became a chef as this will help with my life goal.		



*also add the date you progressed this goal to your Cover Sheet. †don't forget to add these onto your Health Connections page.

Healthy Conversations Workbook

ACTIVITY CARD

Conversation Group

Activity name	Activity date	Type of activity (Conversation Group, Taster Event or Health Action Project activity)
Breakfast Club	6th January 2015	Conversation Group

What area of health did you focus on?

Residents at the Foyer were invited to come to a breakfast club where we provided a range of cereals, fruits and other healthy foods. We used the food to start a discussion between the residents about the benefits of having a healthy breakfast in terms of nutrition and mental health.

Who has the activity helped?

8 residents reported that they enjoyed the Conversation Group and that it had increased their interest in healthy eating.

How has the event helped them?

The young people benefitted from being able to share opinions about healthy eating and learnt about the importance of having a healthy breakfast for energy, concentration and emotional well-being. Residents have also begun to form connections with each other and we hope regular Conversation Groups will help them to develop a strong peer-support network.

Are there any actions to be taken following on from this activity?

To check-in with the young people who attended individually about any healthy eating goals that they might like to set as a result of the conversation.

Quotes from participants:

It was really nice to spend time meeting the other residents and finding out things we have in common. The breakfast was nice too!

I didn't realise that what food I eat affects my mental health until someone mentioned it today. It is something I will think about in the future.

Attendee list

Including staff/external agencies

Name	Age	Type of attendee (e.g. young person, community member, external agency)	Contact details
Mike Robinson	16	Young Person	Phone: 07111111111 Email: Carl-R@example.net
Kayleigh Sutcliffe	19	Young person	Phone: 07222222222 Email: Kayleigh-S@example.net
Aminah Qadir	17	Young Person	Phone: 07333333333 Email: Aminah-Q@example.net
Ying Li	17	Young Person	Phone: 07444444444 Email: Ying-L@example.net
Daniel Newman	23	Young Person	Phone: 07555555555 Email: Daniel-N@example.net
Mohammed Ismail	21	Young Person	Phone: 07666666666 Email: Mohammed-I@example.net
Lukasz Batko	16	Young Person	Phone: 07777777777 Email: Lukasz-B@example.net
Sophie Timmins	18	Young Person	Phone: 07888888888 Email: Sophie-S@example.net
Katie Sutton	35	Foyer staff	Phone: 07333333333 Email: Katie-@example.net
			Phone: Email:
			Phone: Email:
			Phone: Email:

ACTIVITY CARD

Conversation Group

Activity name	Activity date	Type of activity (Conversation Group, Taster Event or Health Action Project activity)
Cookery Skills Taster Event	14th January 2015	Taster Event
<p>What area of health did you focus on?</p> <p>A professional chef came into the Foyer to talk to the residents about the importance of making healthy meals from fresh ingredients, and to teach them a few tricks of the trade that they can use when cooking at home. Residents tried their hands at making chickpea and lentil soup, spicy chicken and vegetable wraps, and fruit kebabs for a sweet treat at the end!</p>		
<p>Who has the activity helped?</p> <p>10 residents participated in the Taster Event and it was useful for the Foyer staff too!</p>		
<p>How has the event helped them?</p> <p>The young people had great fun trying out the recipes and the tutor really helped them to develop their confidence. Some of the residents were a little unsure to begin with but with practice they seemed to realise their potential to make great food!</p>		
<p>Are there any actions to be taken following on from this activity?</p> <p>Some of the young people want to carry on practicing their cookery skills together so every fortnight they will have dinner together and take it in turns to cook for each other.</p>		
<p>Quotes from participants:</p> <p>I was not sure about the recipes at first because I had not even heard of some of the ingredients but they actually tasted alright!</p> <p>Carly, the teacher, was patient and encouraged me to keep trying. By the end I'd made three courses and I was really happy with them.</p> <p>I always eat frozen food because I didn't really think I could afford to eat fresh stuff but now that I know I can I think I'll try to do it more.</p>		

Participants list

Name	Age	Type of attendee (e.g. young person, community member, external agency)	Contact details
Mike Robinson	16	Young Person	Phone: 0711111111 Email: Carl-R@example.net
Kayleigh Sutcliffe	19	Young person	Phone: 0722222222 Email: Kayleigh-S@example.net
Olu Magoro	18	Young person	Phone: 0733333333 Email: Olu@example.net
Piotr Borowski	20	Young person	Phone: 0744444444 Email: Piotr@example.net
			Phone: Email:
			Phone: Email:
			Phone: Email:
			Phone: Email:
			Phone: Email:
			Phone: Email:

Influencing Card 2

Activity name Babysitting circle

Date of first meeting 30th January 2015

What is your vision?

We would like to set up a babysitting circle to help the young mums at our service. We will take turns to look after each other's children so that they can all have some time out to exercise and look after our bodies. We will put on free exercise sessions specifically to work on the areas of the body that needed strengthening after giving birth for the mums to attend.

Why is it needed?

Because of child care commitments lot of mums don't have the time (and sometimes money) to exercise and eat healthily. This can affect their self-esteem, confidence, and their physical health. This project will give the young mums in our service the chance to feel better about their bodies and increase their self-esteem. This will also mean that their children and partners benefit from having a happier, healthier mum.

Who will it help?

Young mums & their families.

Who will be involved?

Qualified exercise coach.
Health Action Project steering group (planning & promotion).
Health Action Project session volunteers (helping the coach to deliver sessions & supporting babysitting circle).
Supporting staff.
Young mums.

What resources will you need?

Promotional materials (e.g. leaflets) & computer to design them on Training equipment we could use the onsite gym. Games that we can give to the babysitter.

What will the impact be?

We hope to sign up at least 20 young mums for the project and have at least 5 attendees per session. The impact on these 20 mums will be improved levels of physical fitness and mental well-being. We will do surveys at the beginning and end of the project to help us see the difference it has made.

The project will also have a positive impact on at least 20 family members as they benefit from having fitter and happier mums. This will also be included in the impact survey.

At least 4 steering group members will develop project management skills through leading the project.

At least 2 volunteers will develop facilitating and/or childcare skills by helping out with the fitness and babysitting sessions.

What will still be happening 6 months from now?

We hope that the sessions will be sustainable and still running 6 months from now: the mums can babysit for each other, and our volunteers will learn from the coach how to deliver the fitness sessions. We hope that the mums will start to come up with their own ideas for sessions that they think will benefit them.

Participants list

Name	Age	Type of attendee (e.g. young person, community member, external agency)	Contact details
Mike Robinson	16	Young Person	Phone: 0711111111 Email: Carl-R@example.net
Kayleigh Sutcliffe	19	Young person	Phone: 0722222222 Email: Kayleigh-S@example.net
Olu Magoro	18	Young person	Phone: 0733333333 Email: Olu@example.net
Jonah Smith	20	Young person	Phone: 0744444444 Email: jonah@example.net
Helen McGuire	19	Young person	Phone: 0755555555 Email: helen@example.net
			Phone:
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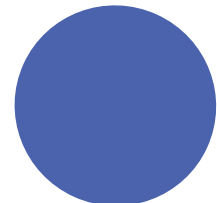
Be: Impact and success

“The flower of health blooms when all parts work together.”

Kurdish Saying

”

5
Be: Impact
and success





Impact and outcomes

The synthesis of Healthy Conversations is when the Values, Intentions and Tools outlined throughout this pack are in alignment. Adopting the Healthy Conversations approach will support staff and young people to Be Advantaged Thinkers when it comes to their health.

This final section demonstrates how this way of **Being** has been achieved by previous participants of the programme.

Examples include:

- A real life user’s journey through the programme
- A service’s journey through the programme
- Testimonials and stories of success from staff and young people

This section has also been designed to help you monitor and measure the development of this way of **Being** with your staff and beneficiaries. Resources provided include:

- The programme outcomes
- The programme’s Theory of Change
- A policy briefing that identifies some of the key health inequalities that are addressed through Healthy Conversations
- Guidance on how you can celebrate, articulate and share the impact that Healthy Conversations has on your service, your beneficiaries, and the wider community.

Healthy Conversations enables young people and the organisations of which they are a part to proactively feed into the Health and Well-being Strategies being developed by the new Health and Well-being Boards established by local authorities as part of the changes brought in following the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

It makes cultural shifts and shapes behaviours towards health and well-being, and draws an explicit link between interventions that move younger people towards learning and work and improvements in their health and well-being. A targeted approach on young people can only enhance existing provision while filling in vital gaps. Healthy Conversations is designed to complement what is provided by statutory services and to enhance young people’s ability to access what is available and shape services that better meet their needs. Where they are unable to do this, whether it is because services do not exist or are being cut, young people will be equipped with skills that enable them to create opportunities to improve their health and lifestyle through their own efforts.

There are two primary messages that we have learnt from our Healthy Conversations story so far:

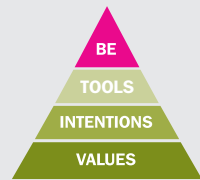
- 1 That it improves young people’s health and well-being
- 2 That it improves the ability of services to deliver public health messages and interventions

Outcomes

Healthy Conversations works towards four main outcomes, each of which has change indicators as outlined below. Full impact and outcomes data from the health programmes delivered by the Foyer Federation since 2007 can be found in the publications section of The Foyer Federation website: foyer.net/what-we-do/publications/



- 1 Young people will have the understanding and resilience to take responsibility for preventative mental health approaches, physical activity choices, and healthier eating habits.
 - Young people can identify and choose healthy lifestyle goals that promote preventative mental health approaches, incorporate purposeful physical activity into daily lives and routines and encourage healthier food and eating habits.
 - Young people can overcome challenges and sustain commitment to healthy lifestyles by making progress towards mental health, physical activity and healthy eating goals.
 - Young people can develop independent strategies to take control of a healthy lifestyle by creating Health Action Plans to sustain positive impacts on mental health, physical activity and healthy eating in the future.
- 2 Young people will feel connected to a ‘healthy opportunities network’ that can encourage and sustain their preventative mental health approaches, increased activity levels and improved eating habits.
 - Young people develop a peer support network by accessing Healthy Conversation Groups to promote health solutions.
 - Young people will explore the local network of health opportunities associated with their health goals and plans through attendance at Health Taster Events.
 - Young people will complete a list of Health Connections that ensures they are connected to the services and support they need to achieve their healthy lifestyle goals and plans.
- 3 Young people can get involved in purposeful activity to achieve greater social interaction and health equality in their lives by Taking Action in their local communities.
 - Young people volunteer to Take Action through activities that improve access to mental health, physical activity and healthy eating support.
 - Young people progress personal Health Goals and Action Plans by volunteering to participate in running of Health Action Projects.
 - Young people volunteer to promote positive health messages to the wider community through Taking Action and engage with the developing local public health environment.
- 4 The service will have increased their capacity to impact on young people’s health and their ability to impact on local health inequalities agenda.
 - Staff are equipped with tools and approaches to enable young people to set meaningful health goals.
 - Staff have increased confidence in applying an Advantaged Thinking approach to creating health solutions.
 - Staff have increased their ability to engage young people in the design and development of Healthy Conversations.
 - Staff have increased understanding of the health inequalities agenda and the ability to articulate service impact on local priorities.

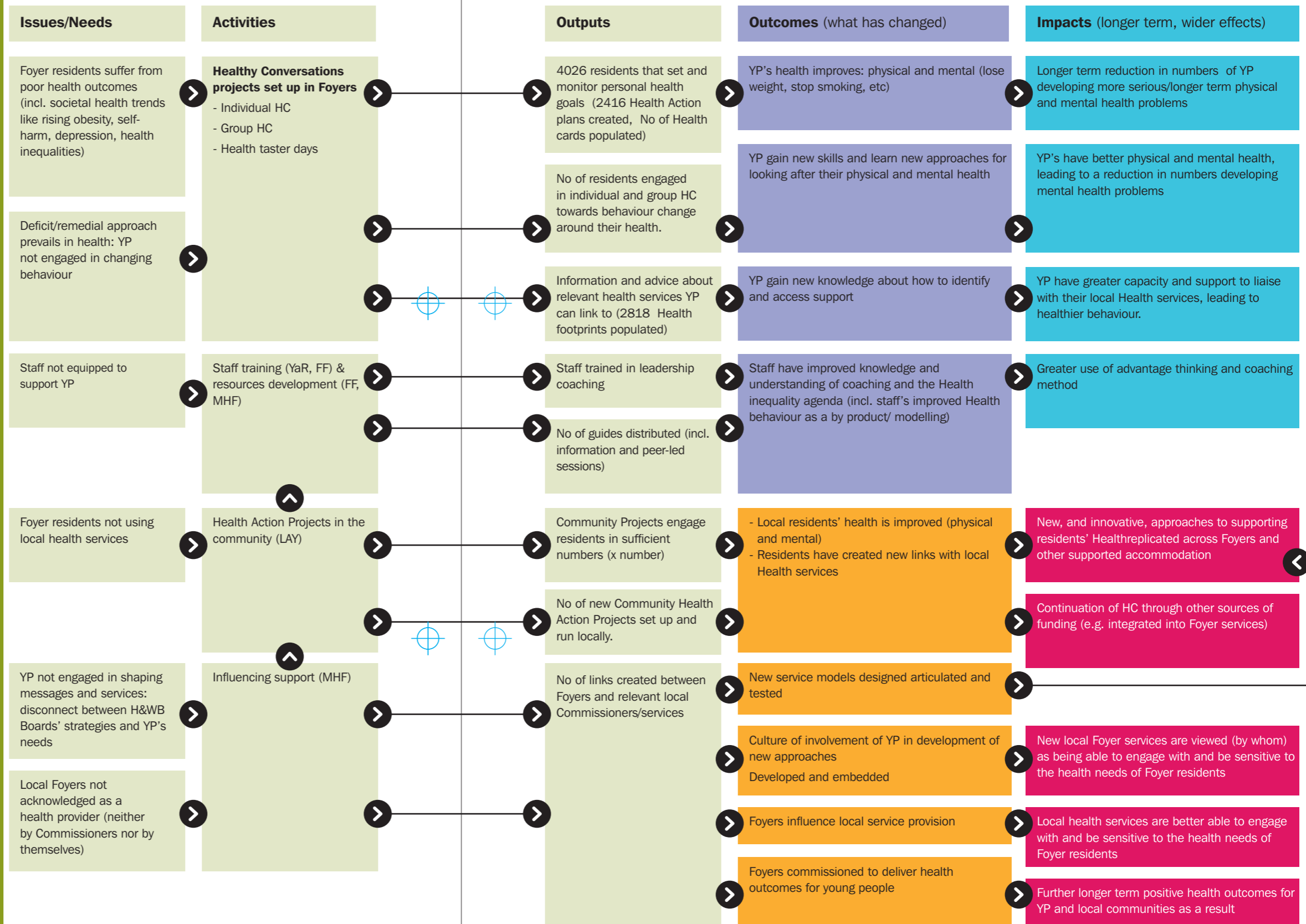




Monitoring and evaluation

Theory of change

The chart below maps the pathways that lead to the attainment of the Healthy Conversations vision.



Outcomes colour codes

- Service user level
- Wider Service level

Impacts colour codes

- Service user level
- Wider Service level

Context Economic downturn, Public Sector funding cuts, Voluntary Sector funding cuts, NHS reform and Localism agenda, High youth unemployment, Increases in Higher Education costs, changes in Welfare benefits system, Youth Contract, local community issues, rising house prices, etc.



A user's experience

Connor's Journey through Healthy Conversations

This story is based on the real experience of a young person who participated in Healthy Conversations.



His coach also supported him to develop detailed Action Plans where he looked at these goals in more depth and planned his next steps.



A service's experience

The following chart demonstrates the journey of a service delivering Healthy Conversations over a 12 month period.

Activity	January	February	March	April
Staff activity				
Training	Advantaged Thinking training			
Planning	Review paperwork as a team	Plan next month's activity	Plan next month's activity	Plan next month's activity
Monitoring	Plan to embed paperwork	Update paperwork from all activities		
Reviewing		Review paperwork from all activities and feedback from Taking Action sessions to feed into monthly planning		
Influencing		Invite external services to launch event	Produce press release about launch event	
Coaching activity		1:1 Coaching: Conversation Cards and Action Plans		
Coaching reviews			Review Conversation Card / Action Plan progression	
Building a Network				Launch event: health fair
Conversation groups				Breakfast club
Recording connections				
Taking Action activity				
Sharing opinions/messages	Consultation survey		Feedback on areas of interest at launch	
Regular participation				
Leading change			Invitations issued for youth steering forum	



Activity	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
		Review Social Action Project kit (additional resource)		Health Influencing e-learning				
	Plan next month's activity	Plan next month's activity	Plan next month's activity	Plan next month's activity	Plan next month's activity	Plan next month's activity	Plan next month's activity	
	Collate, review & report M&E data activities	Update paperwork from all activities			Collate, review & report M&E data activities	Update paperwork from all activities		Collate, review & report M&E data activities
	Review paperwork from all activities and feedback from Taking Action sessions to feed into monthly planning							
	Connect with local charities to support chill out day	Share mid project report with wider organisation	Share survey results with local commissioners	Invite local businesses to donate food & resources to Health Action Project		Invite partners & local community to Health Action Project dinner	Invite partners, commissioners, press & local community to celebration event	Produce end of project press release
	1:1 Coaching: Conversation Cards and Action Plans							
	Review Conversation Card / Action Plan progression							
		Chill out day			Activity weekend			Celebration & awards ceremony
	Breakfast club							
	Gardening club				Cycling club			
			Legal highs debate	Sexual health clinic	Stress management session	Sexual health clinic		Sexual health clinic
			Mid project survey			YP blog about activity weekend	YP write about their experience of programme	Review survey
		Chill out day volunteers meeting	Activity weekend participant meeting	Activity weekend participant meeting	Health Action Project cooking sessions		Health Action Project dinner & showcase event, distribution of cookbooks	YP volunteer to help put on celebration event
	Youth steering forum meeting		Youth steering forum meeting	Health Action Project planning group meetings	Youth steering forum meeting	Health Action Project cookbook design sessions	Youth steering forum meeting	YP share their health stories & ideas with local health commissioners at celebration event

End of project - sustainment of successful health approaches



Stories of success

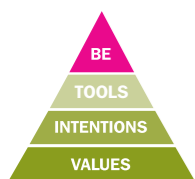
Healthy Conversations delivers a range of positive outcomes for organisations and young people. Here are some testimonials from staff at services that have successfully delivered elements of the programme.



Service wide impact

“Healthy Conversations has enabled us to think more widely in terms of what health is - we've tried to be a little bit more creative. At the moment we are running a junk food club and we have selected some residents who have got particular goals around junk food, i.e. not to rely on it too heavily. Rather than doing healthy eating we have tried to put a twist on it. Chris Lambert, a health coach, came over and made healthy pizzas, which went down really well. So it's about trying to put a twist on activities to make them more attractive. We spend maybe Monday and Wednesday all in the gym together - staff and residents - so it has enabled us to start thinking about staff health and health goals.”

Karen Venables
Foyer Manager, Doncaster Foyer



Forum Housing (Ashvillas) – a coaching case study

A 24 year old male was accommodated at Ashvillas due to a family breakdown, he had been sofa surfing for 6 months before being accommodated with us. He became estranged from his family due to a very poor relationship with his mum's new partner, and shortly after this his paternal father passed away.

It has taken him along time to deal with his issues presenting with low self esteem, depression and offending concerns as well as not being engaged in any employment or training. Staff worked with him and managed to achieve a lot of positive outcomes using the Healthy Conversations programme. Having the tools available from Healthy Conversations enabled staff to work on all his negatives and try to achieve positive outcomes to allow him to grow and deal with his presenting issues.

Staff focused on 5 areas that were having a negative impact on his mental and physical health.

- Motivation and taking responsibility
- Meaningful use of his time
- Managing tenancy
- Managing money / offending

Staff have engaged him in various activities ranging from cooking on a budget to playing golf and have also completed pieces of work with him to help him to build his confidence and grow as an individual enabling him to make better life choices. He has since left our service achieving the following objectives

- He has built up a relationship with his mum
- Found work in Chester
- Successfully gained urgent needs status from the HPP
- Left with no D/C owing
- Had no further offending issues.
- He is now accommodated in a private tenancy with his partner and they are soon to be expecting their 1st child together.

Without the support he received he probably would have continued to offend, wouldn't have found or been motivated to seek employment, would have definitely not have sustained his tenancy positively and would never have built bridges with his mum.



“I feel without the help and support I received from Ashvillas I probably would have ended up in lots more trouble maybe even jail. When I came to Forum I was really low and didn't really want to change. I had been in trouble with the police and often spent my giro on the first day so I would be skint for 2 weeks until I got paid again. Staff worked with me to sort my life out before it got worse. I now live with my girlfriend who I met at Ashvillas and we are expecting our first baby in a few months. I also have a job at BrighHouse in Chester and am working there full time. I never thought I would be where I am today. I know without help my life would have been very different.”

Taster Events

“The Taster Day which we organised was focused on promoting general well-being amongst the young people. We organised for a range of different outside agencies to come to the Foyer and set up stands to show what they can offer to the young people. Surveys we have carried out with our residents consistently show that young people recognise the mental well-being 'pay off' of being meaningfully occupied as this makes them feel more positive and energetic. We therefore invited agencies both that could help directly with health issues and also those that could engage young people with positive activities more generally.”

Feedback from the residents after the well-being day was that they found it very helpful. The fact it was in-house was good as not all young people have the confidence just to walk in somewhere and ask for information but felt at ease with it being at the Foyer. One of the successes from the day was that 3 residents (YO, BB, NO'L) signed up with the Prince's Trust for a course which involved them building a land rocket and setting it off to see how fast it would go. All three completed the course and are now working with us to find their next course.”

Penny Schofield
Training and Development Manager
Knightstone Housing



Health Connections

“[The Health Connections activity] has been a really valuable document. It appears to be promoting clients well-being through a number of services and getting clients to think about their wider health needs. We have an increase in people re-registering with GP's, Visiting Dentists, considering counselling services and accessing other therapies, This has been really positive for our Mental Health Clients.”

Mayday Trust



Taking Action

“We have continued to make progress with our social enterprise that will provide our residents with enhanced employability skills, and also the ability to set up their own businesses in the future. We have created great working partnerships with local charities, especially Age Concern UK, who have provided us with a workshop space to carry out our restorations, furniture that we can renovate and also a market stall which we can use to sell our goods. This market stall will save us £4000.00 which we will be able to use in other areas of developing our social enterprise. Two of our residents have gained employment so far, one paid and one voluntary at the Age UK warehouse.”

Jody Masouri
Open Talent Development Officer
Newhaven Foyer





Spreading the message



When promoting the messages from your Healthy Conversations it is important to create a strong and recognisable brand in order to encourage trust and engagement from young people and other stakeholders. This section will take you through how to demonstrate that brand and how to effectively communicate it.

Effective communications are an important way to add value to your Healthy Conversations project. Communications can engage stakeholders, attract supporters and spread knowledge of your work to create a lasting impact.

In doing so we aim to influence the three Ps:

- P**olicy affecting young people and services
- P**ractice in services for young people
- P**erception of and in services for young people

Policy relates to the rules which govern how an organisation or individual behaves. A Healthy Conversations project may influence policy, either by changing rules within their service or by seeking to change the actions of local government that affect young people's health and well-being. Practice relates to a method in procedure(s) or a way of doing of things.

A Healthy Conversations project may influence practice, either by changing how their service promotes good health or by seeking to change the operations of other services that affect young people's health and well-being. Perception relates to how something is viewed, understood, or interpreted. A Healthy Conversations project may influence a person's perception of health and well-being or it may seek to change the commissioner's perception of a service and its ability to offer health outcomes.

Audience

The audience for Healthy Conversations is as vast as you'd like it be. We suggest you consider segmenting your audience into the following six areas:

- 1 Staff working with young people
- 2 Young people in your organisation and local community

- 3 The surrounding community and young people's social networks
- 4 Services offering health solutions
- 5 Senior staff within your organisation
- 6 Funders and commissioners of public health provision

Each audience will need the three Ps communicated different, with different key messages and perhaps at a different time. Think about your message and the appropriateness of the ask.

Messaging

Below you will find several descriptions of the service you can use to share the message. You may want to expand or alter this description for your own needs and audience.

Short description:

Healthy Conversations is a programme developed by the Foyer Federation and delivered in services around the country. Originally funded through the Big Lottery, the programme increases the capacity of services to promote young people's health and well-being and young people's capacity to take positive healthy actions.

Paragraph description:

Healthy Conversations is about bringing health to life. It's a programme from the Foyer Federation designed for services to improve their health and well-being offer for young people by empowering them to view health in a new way, set goals and take positive healthy actions. The programme, which was originally funded through the Big Lottery, has three outcomes:

- 1 Young people will have the understanding and resilience to take responsibility for preventative mental health approaches, physical activity choices, and healthier eating habits.
- 2 Young people will feel connected to a 'healthy opportunities network' that can encourage and sustain their preventative mental health approaches, increased activity levels and improved eating habits.
- 3 Young people can get involved in purposeful activity to achieve greater social interaction and health equality in their lives by Taking Action in their local communities.

Branding Guidelines:

The Healthy Conversations logo is a version of the Foyer Federation logo. The standard logo has a white background. An inverted version is also available. The standard logo can also be used over other plain backgrounds as long as it is clear and recognisable.

The logo should:

- Be situated in the top centre or top right of the page
- Be the largest (or equal largest) logo on the page
- On A4 size be 2.83cm or 4cm tall
- Usually appear only once per page

You should never:

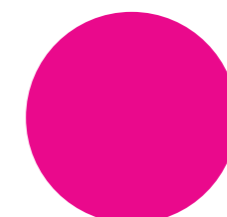
- Stretch or distort the logo
- Over- or underlay the logo with a different logo
- Change the colour or create unauthorised variants of the logo



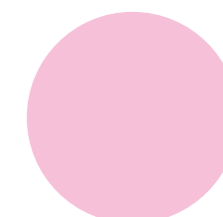
Partner logos

Partners delivering Healthy Conversations projects will naturally wish to attach their own logos. Individual projects may incorporate aspects of their own brand but they must be in addition to the Healthy Conversations brand. Partner logos must accompany both the Healthy Conversations and Big Lottery logo. They should be the same height and size (or smaller) as the logo they accompany

Brand Colours



HEALTHY CONVERSATIONS PINK
C1 M99 Y1 K0
R234 G11 B139



HEALTHY CONVERSATIONS PINK 20%
C1 M30 Y0 K0
R246 G139 B217



Policy Briefing

– The Need for Healthy Conversations

The following has been taken from policy briefings provided to the Foyer Federation by ECORYS, the external evaluators of the Healthy Conversations programme.’

It is clear from the data provided that young people, and in particular young people who have experienced poverty and/or homelessness, face particular health inequalities relating to healthy eating, physical activity and mental well-being. This briefing can be used to support your Healthy Conversations messaging.

Healthy Eating

Poor diet is one of the major contributing factors causing rising levels of obesity amongst children and adults in England. Government statistics estimate that currently 61.3% of adults are overweight or obese as well as 30% of children aged between 2 and 15. Research carried out by the Government Foresight team predicts that without action being taken, levels of obesity in England will continue to rise.

Concern about levels of obesity related to poor diet stem from the negative health outcomes associated with being overweight. For example, being overweight impacts on physical health including making it more likely that an individual will develop type 2 diabetes, heart disease as well as some forms of cancer. Poor diet, obesity levels and overweight people are a concern across all age groups. However, there is some evidence to show that amongst 16-24 year olds, poor dietary choices are more pronounced. For example, the Office for National Statistics report that consumption of five portions of fruit and vegetable by adults is lowest amongst those aged 16-24, with just 15% of men and 20% of women in this age group eating five or more portions a day compared to 24% of men and 29% of women overall.

It is estimated that health issues associated with being overweight cost the NHS some £5 billion every year. In Healthy Liveethnicity's Healthy People: a call to action on obesity in England the emphasis on controlling the amount of food that is consumed is prioritised by Government as the means to tackle problems caused by obesity. **“Increasing physical activity is important but, for most of us who are overweight and obese, eating and drinking is key to weight loss.”**

There are also social and economic issues associated with poor diet. In the Marmot Review, Fair Society Healthy Lives, being obese or overweight was linked to social deprivation, household income and ethnicity. Public Health England report that dietary intake and eating behaviours in England are related to socioeconomic position, such that people from lower socioeconomic groups tend to have less healthy diets than those from higher socioeconomic groups. While 34.5% of people from the highest income quartile group eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day, this drops to just 19.5% amongst people in the lowest quartile.

Physical Activity

According to the most recent government information, 61.3% of adults and 30% of children aged between 2 and 15 years are overweight or obese. A report by the Government Foresight department indicates that if current trends continue, nearly 60 per cent of the UK population will be obese by 2050. The obesity crisis has social as well as economic implications; the Foresight report warns that being obese or overweight affects health and reduces quality of life, as well as leading to spiralling health and social care costs. Being overweight or obese carries a range of health risk factors, for example people who are overweight or obese have a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease and certain types of cancer.

While all age groups are impacted by the obesity crisis, for young people in particular, concerns about declining health have been linked to wider structural conditions such as the poor employment prospects currently experienced by young people across Europe. A recent World Health Organisation (WHO) report; the Review of Social Determinants and the health divide in the WHO European Region, linked health outcomes to employment status, and identified current high levels of youth unemployment (and in particular long-term unemployment) and the link to poorer health outcomes as a concern.



This echoed recent concerns voiced by the Chief Medical Officer for England, about the health of young people Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET):

“Unemployment may be falling in the UK, but persistent high levels of the number of young people over 18 not in employment, education or training is storing up a public health time bomb waiting to explode.”

A contributing factor to the high levels of obesity in England is that activity levels in the wider population have dropped significantly in recent years, with a rise in sedentary lifestyles. In order to address this issue, in July 2011, the Department of Health published UK physical activity guidelines for every age group in the country from the under 5s through to older adults aged 65+. For adults aged 19-64 years, the Department recommends that participants take up to 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity over the course of a week. For young people aged from 5 to 18, the Department recommends at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day, with three days a week of muscle strengthening activity. The physical activity guidelines were implemented as part of a range of measures set out in the cross departmental strategy Healthy Lives Healthy People, a strategy for public health in England which set a target for a downward trend in excess weight in children and adults by 2020.

Mental Well-Being

Poor mental health is one the largest causes of disability in young people aged 16 -25 in the UK. It is closely connected with many other issues that affect young people, such as poor physical health, relationships, education and learning, and work prospects. In addition, young people are often reluctant to seek help and appropriate mental health support is not always available.

For young people with mental health needs, the services that might support them are split between Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Adult Mental Health Services (AMHS). The transition to adult mental health services is not always easy, with lots of gaps in communication between services and differences in types of support and provision. Concerns about the quality of transition for young people from CAMHS to AMHS, or out of mental health services altogether, have existed for some time. Too often these transitions have been poorly planned and managed, resulting in young people aged between 16 and 19 not receiving appropriate services or ‘falling through the net’.



The challenges faced by young people moving from adolescence into adulthood have been well documented for over a decade. The additional challenges of negotiating service transitions at the same time add extra stress for young people. What should be a time of increasing independence and opportunity can signal a period of uncertainty and even deterioration in their mental health for young people with mental health problems .

The recent report from the Chief Medical Officer outlines the importance of needing to shift towards a preventative model, as well as ensuring joined up commissioning and delivery of services and that the voice of the young person is central to the development of their services. The report goes on to suggest that early intervention should occur at key points in young people’s lives, especially at times of rapid development and in times of transition at key life stages, and that we should focus on improving lives for all, with proportionately greater resources targeted at those who are more disadvantaged. Building resilience has also been identified as a priority, not just in terms of physical health, but also in mental well-being – this recommendation urges those involved in commissioning and delivering services to adopt an approach that increases resilience and well-being .

Conclusion

The data above sets out a clear rationale for the need for an intervention such as Healthy Conversations which:

- Provides direct interventions to address health inequalities caused by poor nutrition, low levels of physical activity and poor emotional well-being.
- Offers young people the opportunity to develop the skills and resources to maintain good nutrition and appropriate levels of physical exercise, and strategies to maintain emotional well-being in the future.
- Equips young people and the staff who work with them with the knowledge and resources to gain access to support services provided by local and national government, charities and others.
- Enables young people to become involved in the decision-making, scoping and shaping of services that are targeted at them.



Complementary resources

Below is a list of Appendices that are provided as complementary digital resources.

Appendix 1: The History of Healthy Conversations

Appendix 2: Advantaged Thinking: a movement for positive investment in young people

Appendix 3: Coaches' Spotters guide

Appendix 4: Conversation Group Resource Cards

Appendix 5: Taster Event / Conversation Group Ideas

Appendix 6: Examples of Health Connections

Appendix 7: Taking Action

7.1 Young people influencing services - what are the key factors for success?

7.2 How to write a questionnaire

7.3 Setting up a Health Action Project

7.4 Health Action Project Examples

7.5 Health Action Project Approaches

Appendix 8: Outcomes reporting template

The Foyer Federation also offers a suite of products for organisations to more effectively engage, harness and develop the talents of young people. You may find it beneficial to the success of your Healthy Conversations project or your organisation more generally to bolt on to Healthy Conversations additional Foyer Federation projects. For more information or a conversation regarding these additional services, please contact the Foyer Federation directly:

w foyer.net e inbox@foyer.net







Contact details

The Foyer Federation

3rd Floor, 5-9 Hatton Wall London, EC1N 8HX

t 020 7430 2212

w foyer.net

e inbox@foyer.net

The Foyer Federation

Registered Office Address:
3rd Floor, 5-9 Hatton Wall,
London, EC1N 8HX

Registered in England and Wales: 2699839

Registered Charity number: 1040482

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