Safeguarding Voice Group Newsletter

The Safeguarding Voice Group last met in March 2020 – almost on the eve of Covid lockdown restrictions in the UK coming into force. However, the 3rd September saw the first virtual meeting of this group via a WebEx conference call.

Whilst this last 6 months have undoubtedly been one of the most challenging periods of time we have collectively experienced, bringing feelings of isolation and loneliness to many. Normal everyday activities have ground to a halt along with cancellation of regular user group meetings and additionally bringing different working practices to many. For some, this heralded the exacerbation of existing mental health issues - or the beginning of hitherto never before experienced issues.

We have been extremely proud and delighted to hear how our individual members/ service user groups have, in these unheralded times, still managed to think positively and innovatively to help themselves; both within their own organisation and also reaching to the wider population within the district and beyond to develop coping strategies to help themselves and others deal with this unprecedented situation.

We acknowledge that for some, the use of technology has often presented new and challenging issues in order to maintain that vital contact with the outside world – sometimes because of their own individual circumstances and sometimes, the availability of technology and equipment to enable the Zoom and WebEx meetings that many of us are now becoming so familiar with. For many, this has been the first time using social media platforms and communication platforms such as Zoom and WebEx. The Safeguarding Voice virtual meeting welcomed many regular faces – but badly missed the input of some, such as Mohammed (…amongst many others), who is always an extremely engaged and dedicated attendee at our ‘normal’ meetings.

It is truly amazing to hear about this work that has been steadfastly y taking place over this last 6 months - overcoming individual personal difficulties to help others stay connected and supported. As such, we feel it is really important to share some of the experiences and innovative work that is being undertaken to combat loneliness and isolation; stays connected and supported, and provide user friendly advice on staying safe in these unprecedented times.

As such, we proudly present………

**BRITISH BAKE OFF STAR OF THE FUTURE?**

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..... Guess who will be baking the buns when we have our next ‘normal’ meeting!!

Damian has been keeping busy baking and we can’t wait to sample his buns and cakes! Damian has also been instrumental in People First Bradford group WhatsApp group by providing demos and guides on the correct way to wear a mask, avoiding scammers (particularly to those new to social media) and staying safe on the internet. He is providing a fantastic service by being the first to pick up on new laws and guidelines and share these via social medial in a really user friendly way.

**PODCASTS, VOLUNTEERING AND ACTIVITY BOOKS and MORE!**





……….Rising star of social media broadcasting, helping others stay connected and supported.

Catrina, from People first Keighley found it difficult in the first weeks of lockdown and so has helped others by producing activity books, volunteering to provide support and advice to others and even producing podcasts to share information – all with a focus on mental health. Catrina has a particular interest in safeguarding issues affecting those in a vulnerable situation and we look forward to working closely with her both in the Safeguarding Voice Group and via this newsletter.