



HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

YOUTH LOCAL ACTION CENTRE



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"We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who was involved in this Health Impact Assessment, and in particular Dr. Alison Golby for her knowledge and support throughout the process."

Christine Esposito
Development Director / Sandfields Aberavon First Co-ordinator

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SECTION 1:0

"The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to developing the use of the health impact assessment in Wales as a part of its strategy to improve health and well being to reduce health inequalities." (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004)

1:1 Introduction:

A rapid health impact assessment of the Youth Local Action Centre took place in November 2004 at a workshop attended by key stakeholders of this project for young people in Sandfields and Aberavon. This was the first health impact assessment completed by the Communities First Partnership, and a 'learning by doing' approach was taken.

Health Impact Assessment

Health Impact Assessment (H.I.A) can help organisations identify the connections between their work and the health and well being of the individuals, groups and communities with which they work. A definition of HIA that is widely accepted is:

"Health impact assessment is a combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, programme or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population".

This definition is useful in that it suggests that there is no standard way of conducting an assessment but it does provide a systematic yet flexible and practical framework in which to assess projects, policies and programmes. H.I.A. also highlights the inequalities dimension as policies, programmes or other initiatives can affect groups within a given population in different ways.

By using the health impact assessment approach, organisations are working to ensure people's health is being considered, therefore working towards the wider aim of reducing negative influences upon health and well being as well as increasing the opportunities to improve them.

Wider determinants of health

There are a myriad of factors that can have an effect on the health and well being of individuals, groups and communities - often referred to as the wider determinants of health (see Appendix 1). The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines health as:

"a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

This definition suggests that people's sense of well-being can be poor even where there is no 'identifiable disease'. The environment, income, employment, the organisation of transport, the design and condition of houses, crime and the social and physical condition of local neighbourhoods all contribute to good and poor health.

H.I.A considers the way in which projects, proposals or policies developed by organisations may affect the health determinants, and thus assesses how what organisations do impacts upon the health and well being of the population groups with which they work.

1:2 New Sandfields Aberavon & Sandfields First Partnership

New Sandfields Aberavon (NSA) is a community regeneration organisation and a registered charity that aims to promote community regeneration in Sandfields and Aberavon. NSA aims to improve education; training and retraining particularly

amongst unemployed people as well as promote health and well-being, public safety, prevent crime and provide recreational facilities for everyone in the community.

The Communities First programme is a long-term strategy for improving the living conditions and prospects for people in the most disadvantaged communities in Wales. In Sandfields Aberavon, the programme seeks to ensure that the funds and support available from the Welsh Assembly Government and other public sector agencies are targeted at this community so that it may become more prosperous and develop more opportunities for its residents.

1:3 Youth Local Action Centre (YLAC)

The initial need for YLAC has been identified via the Sandfields First Neighbourhood Plan 2005-2015 for Sandfields and Aberavon, with YLAC being the overarching project for youth provision in the area, encapsulating all other identified projects for youth. On a broader scale, it is important that YLAC works to meet the aims and objectives as set out by both Local and National Authorities to meet the needs of young people in the community and serving specific target groups within them.

1:4 The Project Outline:

YLAC will co-ordinate provision for young people aged 10-19 in Sandfields Aberavon. The project will be a local catalyst for provision, identifying what is needed and wanted by groups and individuals working with providers to develop appropriate responses. In this way the project will deliver local solutions to local problems. The project will not deliver directly but will complement through co-ordinating provision and supporting partners to seek funding or other forms of support to sustain various activities. There are no other organisations working

across the area that offer this co-ordination and funding support function for young people and young peoples services, thus in this respect the project is unique.

1:5 Role of YLAC

The role of YLAC is to work in conjunction with a vast range of organisations with the aim of providing young people with a high standard of quality and diverse range of continuous and structured services. Thus, a partnership approach in working with youth providers is fundamental to the success of YLAC, in order for young people to have access to any relevant and up to date information they require. Undertaking regular mapping of local provisions and resources is essential in order to have a continued knowledge of what is available. This will allow any gaps in provision to be highlighted, as well as any duplications being made. This will prove to be both cost and time effective for those agencies involved. Finally, in order to work successfully in addressing the needs of young people, it is vital that we work alongside them and work to empower them. Consultation and partnership working with a representative range of young people will enable providers to reflect these needs in the services provided.

The project will be implemented in two phases, with the 'developmental' phase one being funded by the Welsh Assembly Government. In the 'operational' phase two, the project aims to employ three workers who will bring together young people and youth service providers, to deliver co-ordinated, quality services and to develop community led projects on three local sites - Bevin Avenue, Unit 11 and Michna Street.

1:6 Health Impact Assessment of YLAC:

By undertaking an H.I.A, YLAC can assess the possible health consequences of its decisions, including programmes or projects. By assessing the potential positive and negative effects upon the health and wellbeing of young people with whom it works, YLAC will be able to improve and enhance the service that it provides. There are a number of areas YLAC, through its multi-agency work, includes; education, training, employment, income, housing, family organisation, sense of community belonging, divisions within the community, sexual health, drug and alcohol misuse, diet, the local environment and social exclusion. The project is therefore especially appropriate for a health impact assessment which considers all of these influences on health as part of the process. By looking for ways of reducing any negative impacts and enhancing any positive effects identified, YLAC will also be working towards improving health and reducing inequality.

A rapid health impact assessment following WHIASU guidelines (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004) took place on 1st November 2005 at a workshop (see programme, Appendix 2) attended by 10 representatives from the following key stakeholder organisations: Communities First partnership, New Sandfields Aberavon, YLAC, and Neath Port Talbot CBC Youth Service (a full list of those participating is in Appendix 3). The wider determinants of health checklist (see Appendix 1) were used as a guide throughout the event. After identifying potential positive and negative impacts and target population groups there followed a group discussion using the knowledge and expertise of those taking part (see section 2). The group also discussed and agreed a set of recommendations to inform the development of the YLAC project as well as a Big Lottery Fund bid which was submitted in January 2006 (see section 3).

SECTION 2:0 - The Health Impacts

The following summary is taken from the H.I.A workshop undertaken on 1st November 2005, and is to be read in conjunction with the health determinants checklist (see Appendix 1)

○ 2:1 Individual Lifestyles -

POSITIVES:

There will be a positive impact on diet, exercise, drugs and alcohol and sexual health. Young people will have the opportunity to access informative services covering issues surrounding the above areas from agencies such as West Glamorgan Council for Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Relationship Advice Drop in Service, Youth Advisory Service and the Youth Service.

NEGATIVES:

Although YLAC is open to all young people aged 10-19, there will be a number of young people in the area who will not access services. However, YLAC will not knowingly exclude any young people from obtaining advice and support or participating in any activities.

○ 2:2 Social and Community Influences -

POSITIVES:

Here, it is important to look at the way in which young people experience things such as local pride, a sense of belonging in their community, isolation, peer pressure, community identity, and social exclusion for example. If young people participate in projects that focus on such areas it is likely to have a positive influence on them. There is a need to get young people involved in their local community and help to bridge the gap between the

generations. Involving young people in the 'Youth Development sub-group- is a way of achieving this. Intergenerational projects will work to have a positive impact on some of the areas included. Consultations with young people will work to empower them and in creating 'user led' projects allow them to have more pride in the projects they work on. Thus, if these projects are community based, they will have more pride in their community. Although YLAC is open to all young people, working with agencies that focus on certain groups, such as the Youth Inclusion Programme, will allow those young people identified as being at specific risk from social exclusion to have tailored support.

NEGATIVES:

It is important to include young people in all aspects of the community, not simply the 'youth' aspect. By having young people represented on all development sub-groups it can help to break down barriers between generations. There is a need to look at ways in which the community as a whole can be engaged with YLAC.

- 2:3 Living / Environmental Conditions -

POSITIVES:

Working in conjunction with agencies who focus on the environment of the local area such as British Trust for the Conservation of Volunteers in setting up projects with young people to have a positive influence on this aspect of the local community is a way in which YLAC can have a positive impact on the topic areas in this section. Young people working to improve their local environment will also have a positive impact on public perceptions of young people held by older generations that often see young people as being anti-social. For example, young people can become involved in creating safe play areas for

younger children and helping to improve the attractiveness of the area within which they live.

NEGATIVES:

Peer pressure may have a negative impact in that many young people may feel they do not want to become involved as participation will be discouraged. There is a need to link in with wider strategies.

○ 2:4 Economic Conditions -

POSITIVES

Unemployment, income, economic inactivity and type of employment are issues that will be addressed for young people with specific needs by the agencies that specialise in these particular areas. The method of sign-posting that would be in place would ensure that young people had clear access to the source of information best suited to their needs. This also means that resources are released from each organisation being worked with, not just one.

NEGATIVES:

Communities First will not be around forever to offer support to the community. Therefore it is important that young people do not become dependant on the services currently offered to them and are able to develop and move on.

○ 2:5 Access and Quality of Services -

POSTIVES:

Having facilities that are available to offer specific services to young people including 'one stop shops' and sign posting advice will allow young people to have easier access and information to the services they require. It is important that existing venues are used to their full

potential in order to meet this need. This also helps to increase revenue for these facilities to improve and maintain them.

NEGATIVES:

It needs to be considered how young people will get to these venues - whilst they may be local for some young people, they may not for others. Evidence of a need for the creation of a 'youth minibus service' may need to be looked at. Although making use of existing venues is a good idea, it may be difficult to incorporate young people into the timetables that are already in place and the conflict in interest that may result. Often, young people are seen as an 'add-on' to users of centres and are not given the same choice and freedom as other users at certain times. Currently people using the facilities may be opposed to young people using them as well. It is often the case that young people's services have to 'fit in' around those for other members of the community.

SECTION 3:0

3:1 Recommendations

During the discussion, the group developed, and agreed, the following recommendations for improving and enhancing the YLAC project, as well as informing the Big Lottery Fund bid. The recommendations are as follows:

Sustainability

- Need to continue to identify young people's needs and promote the empowerment for young people.
- Look for different funding - liaising with different organisations and sharing resources.

Cross generational projects / Cross cutting Communities First themes

- Not just a focus on the 10-19 age range.
- Parents need to be both encouraged and enabled to take a more active role and participate in activities / projects.
- Work with agencies that provide the next step for those aged 19 + such as Sandfields Training Resource Initiative for Developing Employment Skills and the Youth Service for example.
- Look at the development of 'shared' projects such as young people tending to the gardens of the elderly, or the elderly sharing their skills with young people for example.

Links with relevant projects and organisations:

- Ensure links are made with local and national providers via mapping exercise of provision.
- Create links with minority groups and sustain links already made with groups such as Minority Ethnic Women's Network.
- Service level agreements need to be made with all organisations with which YLAC works.

Venues:

- Look at accessibility of venues for young people including flexibility with the utilisation of resources.
- Consider impact of community transport difficulties in terms of take up of provision.
- Where facilities are available but deemed inadequate, look for funding to improve these and make more positive use of them.

3:2 Conclusion:

By using a health impact assessment approach, it is apparent that the work of YLAC and partnership organisations will have some influence on the 'determinants' of health and well being, and upon the community as a whole as well as the 10-19 age group. By identifying the positive and negative health impacts, YLAC can work towards improving the health and well being of the individuals, groups and community with which it works as well as addressing health inequalities.

Appendix 1:

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING DETERMINANTS CHECKLIST

| | |
|--|---|
| 1. Lifestyles | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diet• Physical exercise• Use of alcohol, cigarettes, non-prescribed drugs• Sexual activity• Other risk-taking activity |
| 2. Social and community influences on health | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family organisation and roles• Citizen power and influence• Social support and social networks• Neighbourliness• Sense of belonging• Local pride• Divisions in community• Social isolation• Peer pressure• Community identity• Cultural and spiritual ethos• Racism• Other social exclusion |
| 3. Living/environmental conditions affecting health | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Built environment• Neighbourhood design• Housing• Indoor environment• Noise• Air and water quality• Attractiveness of area• Community safety• Smell/odour• Waste disposal• Road hazards• Injury hazards• Quality and safety of play areas |
| 4. Economic conditions affecting health | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unemployment• Income• Economic inactivity• Type of employment• Workplace conditions |
| 5. Access and quality of services | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical services• Other caring services• Careers advice• Shops and commercial services• Public amenities• Transport• Education and training• Information technology |
| 6. Macro-economic, environmental and sustainability Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government policies• Gross Domestic Product• Economic development• Biological diversity• Climate |

Please note that this list is a guide and is not exhaustive.

Appendix 2

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT RAPID APPRAISAL WORKSHOP

Sandfields First

1st November 2005

12.30pm – 5pm

AGENDA

12.30 Lunch

1.00 Review of health impact assessment (Alison Golby)

Brief introduction to the proposal

Any questions

1.30 Rapid Appraisal – Group Work

Screening the proposal

Completing the Basic Screening Record Sheet

Deciding the focus

3.00 Tea/ Coffee

3.15 Formulating the recommendations

Key impacts in greater detail

Deciding your recommendations

4.45 Feedback and evaluation

5.00 Close

Appendix 3

Organisations represented at the HIA on the YLAC Project:

- Welsh Health Impact Assessment Support Unit - *Alison Golby*
- New Sandfields Aberavon - *Ian Issac, Andrea Croxson*
- Sandfields First - *Christine Esposito, Aled Davies, Sarah Mainwaring, Ryland Doyle*
- Youth Local Action Centre - *John Evans, Anne-Marie Didio*
- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Youth Service

For more information regarding the YLAC project please contact:

- Anne-Marie Didio - annemarie.ylac@btconnect.com
- John Evans - john.kyac@btconnect.com

Reference

Welsh Health Impact Assessment Support Unit (2004)
Improving Health and Reducing Inequalities: a practical guide to health impact assessment, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government.