Case study

Youth provision for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people

Introduction/Background

In 2003 the Hillingdon JSNA highlighted LGBT young people as being disproportionately likely to suffer from health, social, and economic disadvantage. In January 2013, the Public Health Team also published a report, ‘An assessment of homophobic bullying and health and well-being amongst young Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people in Hillingdon’, detailing the experiences of the young LGBT community with regard to homophobic bullying.

What was the equality issue?

Over 60 % of young lesbian and gay people felt that there is neither an adult at home or at school who they can talk to about being gay. The report suggested that young people from the LGBT community were at higher risk of mental disorder, suicidal tendencies, substance misuse, and deliberate self harm compared to the heterosexual population, due to social exclusion, homophobia and discrimination in our society.

One of the recommendations of the report was to create a youth group for LGBT young people where they would be supported by qualified and experienced youth workers.

How was this addressed and what was the outcome?

In response to these findings, the Early Intervention Service developed links with Mosaic Youth Centre to establish a weekly LGBT programme at one of our Young People’s Centres. Mosaic has a proven track record in supporting LGBT young people and was already working in Camden and Ealing in partnership with the local authorities. The LGBT youth work session began in January 2014.

These youth work sessions promote young people’s health and wellbeing and deliver a structured programme, with activities and workshops, to build young people’s confidence and resilience.

We now have a regular group of young people attending the sessions and are in the process of promoting the sessions across the borough.