

'See Yourself'

a collaborative youth project

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Introduction

- CAMHS Primary Mental Health Worker, Crawley - 2 days
- CAMHS Occupational Therapist for Careleavers Service, East Sussex Council - 3 days
- Professional Doctorate in OT student

Broad Research Interest

Secondary mental and emotional difficulties caused by wider social responses to a primary non-mental health related issue.

e.g. communication difficulties

Literature Review

- Deaf young people (within mainstream school settings) are at increased risk of experiencing secondary mental and emotional difficulties linked with associated social stigma, isolation or exclusion

(Roberts & Hindley 1999; Hindley 1994; Nunes et al 2001; Valentine & Skelton 2007; Ladd 2003; Powers 2002; DoH 2005)

Adversities / Challenges

Isolation → family → hearing parents
→ Community → school
→ Deaf world

Bullying

Frustration → anger through barriers
to expression

Associated difficulties → LD; ASC

Specific Protective Factors

- **Effective Communication** with family & friends
- **Effective access to education**
- **Deaf Identity** → sign language
- **Supportive** community
- **Opportunities** to share thoughts / feelings

My dilemma

Wanting to find an authentic and meaningful way to both undertake research **and** therapeutically engage with young people experiencing perceived difficulties

Research Ethos

- Participatory Action Research
 - Community focus
 - Non-medicalising
 - Equal power in decision making
 - Seek to bring about change
- Occupational Therapy values
 - Well-being through meaningful activity
 - Benefits of Positive Social interaction
 - Working with interests and strengths

Initial Plan

- Co-operative Inquiry (form of PAR)
 - Participatory paradigm
 - Extended epistemology
 - Cycles of Action and reflection
 - 4 ways of knowing
 - Experiential knowing
 - Presentational knowing
 - Propositional knowing
 - Practical knowing

Reason (1995); Heron (1996); Heron & Reason (1997)

2 project groups

- 1st Group

- 3 to 6 young people (aged 13 to 15)
- accessed through Sensory Needs Service
- Hearing aids and no aids
- Attending mainstream schools
- Met fortnightly (2 to 5pm Saturday)
- Sept 2009 - July 2010

2 project groups

- 2nd Group
 - 8 young people (aged 13 to 18)
 - accessed through Ovingdean Hall School
 - Hearing aids and cochlear implants
 - Attending specialist boarding school
 - Met weekly (6:30 to 8pm Mondays)
 - Feb - June 2010

Group Differences

- 1st Group

- Oral
- New to each other
- New environment
- 19 sessions
- 10 months

- 2nd Group

- Oral and signing
- Knew each other
- Familiar place
- 10 sessions
- 4 months

Project Activities

- 1st Group
 - Art / drawing
 - Discussion
 - Story writing
 - Music writing
 - Photography
 - Games (hide & seek)
 - Film making
- 2nd Group
 - Art / writing
 - Discussion
 - Drama
 - Photography
 - Film making

Project Films

1st Group

- 13 min Film included:
 - Audio from discussions
 - Pictures taken by yp's
 - Music and 'rap' written and performed by yp's
 - Interest focused with some mention of deafness

2nd Group

- 13 min film included
 - Yp's interviewing each other
 - Split into themes
 - Discussing their life experiences
 - Discussing their school
 - Discussing future
 - Deaf focused

Film Themes

1st Group

- Discrimination
- Identity
- Peer support
- Bullying
- Love for music

2nd Group

- Bullying at mainstream
- Need for specialist schools
- Love of school community
- What the future holds

Emerging thoughts

- Giving YP's agency / ownership
- Facilitating is about supporting through a process
- Therapeutic learning
 - Different educative styles
- Importance of providing a space
- Peer support
- Process vs product
 - Capturing a process becomes a product
- Service provision without Labeling

Any Questions?

