



# Power2Change

An example of how Irish Practitioners developed a Child to Parent Violence Programme by reflecting on the training run by the Break4Change Programme

# Power2Change Programme

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The Power2Change was developed by TUSLA North Galway Family Support Services and Youth Work Ireland Galway Treo Nua Garda Youth Diversion Project who also worked with the independent facilitators Ewa Halat and Cyril Dully.

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**Treo Nua Garda Youth Diversion Project**

# Power2Change Programme

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# Power2Change - Introduction

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- Context
- Funding
- Aims and objectives of Power2Change
- Target group
- Referral and screening process
- Programme structure and Programme details
- Models of influence

# Power2Change Programme - Introduction

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## Introduction

TUSLA North Galway Family Support Services and Youth Work Ireland Galway Treo Nua Garda Youth Diversion Project in 2014 ran a Child to Parent Violence (CPV) Intervention Programme in Tuam, Count Galway entitled Power2Change. There was a team of eight people in total involved in devising, delivering and evaluating this pilot programme, comprising two therapeutic facilitators and three creative facilitators for the teenagers group, alongside two therapeutic facilitators for the parent/carer group and an external evaluator.

## Context

The basis for this programme is that as an interagency group, we had all become very concerned at the level of child to parent violence that we were becoming aware of in the Tuam community and increasingly we were becoming aware that the cycle of violence was continuing from generation to generation in families with worrying outcomes for young people and future generations of families and we decided that we would like to come up with a programme response to address this issue.

The programme was not adapted because of legislation but rather according to the needs and abilities of the parents involved. The perception of CPV in Ireland is that it is a taboo topic with much guilt and shame attached to it. Hence our approach was to name it straight away and throughout – like Break4Change – hence nothing was hidden and this promoted more openness as well as taking responsibility.

## Funding

We received funding from various funding streams who kindly came on board to support this pilot programme including Western Region Drugs Task Force, Galway County Council Rapid, Galway Rural Development, St. Vincent De Paul, The One Foundation and Tuam Lions Club.

## Aims of Power2Change

The Power2Change programme aims to

- Challenge aggressive/violent behaviour in a safe environment and ultimately promote healthy interpersonal relationships
- Break the pattern of violence continuing within families.
- Support young people and their parents/carers to learn alternative ways of coping with stressful situations.

## Objectives

- To encourage young people to understand the impact that violence can have on their family members and future partners.
- To help young people envision an alternative future for themselves.
- To encourage young people to learn different strategies for dealing with their emotions.
- To assist parents/carers to review their own communications and coping systems.
- To assist parents in examining their behaviour towards their children and to help them to develop more effective relationships with their teenagers.
- To support parents/carers in addressing aggressive and violent behaviour within their families and reduce the instances of abuse and violence.

# Power2Change Programme - Introduction

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## Target group

The programme specifically targeted young people who were carrying out aggressive and/or violent behaviour towards their parents/carers and the parents/carers affected by this aggression and violence in the Galway county area.

- 10 families were referred to the programme, 9 of which took part. (the 10th family still had very aggressive dynamics between parents which was not acknowledged so they were deemed inappropriate)
- 2 other families were discussed by referrers but it was decided they were not suitable for the programme.
- 9 young people: 6 male, 3 female and 9 parents: 2 male, 7 female, began the programme.
- 1 young person attended the programme without a parent
- 1 parent attended without a child
- 8 young people: 6 male, 2 female completed the programme
- 7 parents: 1 male, 6 female completed the programme
- 1 parent completed the programme while his child did not
- 1 young person completed the programme while his parents did not.

Participation in the programme was subject to participants being ready to identify that aggressive behaviour is a part of interaction in the family together with the desire for things to be different.

## Referral process

- Importance of Referrer's knowledge of the programme
- How they put it across to families, honest naming of the issue of child to parent violence and how the programme might be beneficial
- A detailed referral form requiring details specific to the violence and aggression taking place within the home completed by referrer and family being referred

## Screening process

- Facilitators met parents/teenagers separately before the programme, introduced to families by referrers.
- Issue of violence and aggression named.
- Non Judgemental – no blame apportioned, the issue is the violence, not the people involved.
- Acknowledgement that young people themselves may have been witness to, or victim of, violence at home but this programme is about what they want for themselves and their futures so focus is on personal responsibility.
- No hidden agenda – cards are on the table, detailed screening form is completed by facilitators and young person and parent/carer.
- Motivation to change is fundamental.
- Everyone involved is working towards the same goal; what is being offered is a chance to build a better, happier future.

The screening meeting played a huge part in naming the issue of violence in the home. Both teenagers and parents were met by the group facilitators. We all visited their homes, at different times and spoke with them. Parent facilitators met the parents group and the creative support team of the teenager programme met the teenagers. The screening tool for the parents went through numerous types of abuse from different types and levels of physical abuse to emotional, financial, emotional, psychological and verbal – as well as level of injuries suffered. This screening process gained a huge amount of information and we managed to conjure a very real sense of what kind of abuse the parents were experiencing, some on a daily basis.

# Power2Change Programme - Introduction

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The teenager screening tool was more visual – it was a wheel which covered all types of abuse. This needs more work. We also identified a need to gather detail on levels of aggressive behaviour by parent towards child because the dynamic in such families is not necessarily one of one-sided aggressive behaviour.

## Programme structure

- Eight week programme consisting of two groups running parallel:
- Parents/carers group - intensive 2.5 hour interactive therapeutic workshops.
- Young persons' group – a 1 hour long interactive therapeutic workshop followed by an hour long creative workshop.
- A video conversation technique is used to facilitate communication between parent and the teenager – the power of indirect communication.

## Programme details

The eight sessions were scheduled between the mid term breaks seems to work well as the period of time to run a group like this. The timing in the evening was not ideal. 5.00-7.30pm would work better as the young people were wiped out by the time they were going home and the subject matter is intense so close to bed-time. Attendance was excellent and the group were a cohesive unit by the time we took them on a trip to Petersburg Outdoor Education Centre.

## Models of influence

The Break4Change programme was the model structure most suitable to our goal of working with both young people and parents/carers as a multi-agency approach however the content of the Power2Change programme was drawn from a number of development resources utilised by the professionals involved and adapted to suit the needs and arising issues of the target groups presenting, thus resulting in the individual programme title Power2Change. The other specific models of influence we incorporated into the programme are the Non-Violent Resistance Programme and Personal Development Programme. (See teenager programme details for added influences).

Both the parents and the teenager programmes were formulated by the team of professionals who came on board to deliver the programme. We did look at the Break4Change content however we needed to tailor a programme specifically to the needs and issues of the parents and young people we were working with. An idea of the content of the programme sessions is outlined below together with some reflections on things that may be done differently should we be in a position to run such a programme again.



# Power2Change: - Parents' Programme

- Parents' sessions one to eight
- Parents sessions with timings
- Summary

# Power2Change – Parents’ sessions

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## Parents’ Programme (Completed by Michelle Moran, Parent Facilitator)

When we looked at the Break4Change Parents programme, we saw a number of elements that we knew would not work with the parents we were working with.

### Session one

- As you can see from Session one template – there were many similarities in the programme.
- One slight difference is that we didn’t give an overview of the programme as we thought we would lose them. We felt the most important element of the first session was to generate a feeling of safety and comfort in order for them to feel they could share in the group.
- The more obvious difference was the fact we used a communication model we were familiar with (TCI) in relation to dealing with conflict – we did not use the cycle of change as we felt this would have gone over their heads. Perhaps we could have but one of the facilitators had been trained in the aforementioned model and felt the model was a very specific way of dealing with aggressive episodes.
- In hindsight – we may use the cycle of change in our next course as it does explain in detail the whole issue of falling back into old patterns.
- Homework was also given to the Parents – see homework – Session One.

### Session two

- We had to go over some of session one’s material because the attendance had doubled the second week. It was important that we went over the crisis intervention graph and did that more than once using examples during the entire programme.
- We did however use the communication cake, active listening exercise and transactional analysis. Parents Rights and Children’s rights were also on the agenda.
- Part of the reason we didn’t use the Drama triangle was because we didn’t feel comfortable explaining it ourselves.
- Independent Evaluator Veronica came in and participants completed evaluation forms (see evaluation piece).
- Homework for session two was to focus on their goals using the three basket technique from NVR.

### Session three

- After reviewing the previous week – we started with Parents and Children’s rights (we had run out of time the week before).
- Secondly like B4C we looked at what influences children’s behaviour.
- Camera work was carried out in this session – using questions from B4C Programme.
- While this was going on the other facilitator reviewed their homework one by one in the group setting.

### Session four

- Again we reviewed the communication model (session one) and examples of using same. Also similar to B4C – examples of where communication has changed – if any.
- We decided to do a group exercise of how you feel when in confrontation with your teenager. This was powerful as parents found it a relief to admit their fear and other feelings.
- Video clips were watched on an individual basis with one facilitator while the other looked at goals with the rest of the group – focusing on each of them individually. It was agreed among the participants that this was

# Power2Change - Parents' sessions

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- the way they were most comfortable. They did not want to be filmed in a group, nor did the teenagers want to be seen by a group, so we respected their wishes.
- **Homework** – What you do for your child?

## Session five

- We felt reviewing regularly was essential to ensure we got the message across to the parents. We were very conscious of overloading them with information and handouts so did not give more than we had to.
- A lot of this session was similar to B4C after we reviewed what we didn't fit in last week. Homework also similar.
- We did look at a 'what if' plan following the natural v's logical consequences. This exercise encouraged the parents to consider their reactions and have premeditated consequences for their teenagers outbursts. This exercise came from a parenting programme called Parent's Plus of which we are all trained in.
- **Homework** – Name one thing you would like to do together

## Session six

- Reviewed the communication model again – parents find this extremely useful – they come up with very concrete examples we drew from for all parents.
- Again we drew from Parent's plus – an exercise 'Connecting with your teenager'
- We also alluded to this when discussing parenting styles.
- They were asked to do one nice activity this week.

## Session seven

- Review of the models again
- As we did not have time to do the active listening exercise before now, we did it then
- Assertiveness proved to be a good exercise with most scoring low on this test.
- We followed everything else on session a lot of which is in Break 4 Change.

## Session eight

- The independent evaluator came to this session and participants completed evaluation forms again. (See Evaluation for more information)
- We did not do Maslow's hierarchy due to time constraints.
- Concentrated on parents looking at ways to look after themselves, highlighting the importance of same.
- Lastly, in order to promote the parents accessing support, we did an exercise on where they could look to for support if they needed it.
- Video messages were shown to the parents during this session. They were asked three final questions in relation to how they found the programme. These answers were compiled with the teenage answers and facilitators answers for the certification day where a short film was shown.

# Power2Change - Parents' sessions

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## Power2Change timings for the eight sessions

### Session one

#### Introductions of Facilitators (5 minutes)

- Aim of session (5 minutes)
- Participants Introduction (20 minutes)
- Support Contacts (10 minutes)
- Ground Rules (10 minutes)

#### Tea break

- Expectations Hopes and Fears (30 minutes)
- How will things have changed? (20 minutes)
- TCI 2 Pieces (40 minutes)

### Session two

#### (1) *Eammon* (10 minutes)

- Introductions & Names
- Children – Names + Ages
- Recaps

#### (2) *Michelle* (10 - 15minutes)

- Review session
- All up on the wall -
- Hopes/Expectations
- Ground Rules
- What would it be like after 8 weeks?
- Anything to Add....pick one each...

#### (3) *Eammon* (20minutes)

- Crisis Intervention Graph

#### (4) *Michelle* (20mins)

- Communication Cake

#### Tea break

#### (5) *Eammon* (20minutes)

- Active listening Exercise
- Group Exercise

#### (6) *Michelle* (20minutes)

#### Transactional Analysis

#### (7) *Eammon* (20 minutes)

- Parents rights, Children's rights, goals for change.

# Power2Change - Parents' sessions

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## Session three

- Review last session (15 minutes - Michelle)
- Children's rights and Responsibilities and Parents Rights and Responsibilities (20 minutes - Eamonn)
- Influence of Young Persons Behaviour and Influence of Parents Behaviour (20 minutes - Michelle)
- Camera work (Michelle)
- Review Homework, Focus on Goals (Eamonn)

## Session four

- Review Goals/Examples of using IECSAPE model
- How has communication changed? (15 minutes – Eamonn)
- Statements of how you feel when in confrontation with your teenager (20 Minutes – Michelle)

### Video clips – watch at the break

- Discussion after break – what did they see/learn from them (15/20 Minutes)
- Abusive Behaviour/Respectful Behaviour (20 Minutes – Eamonn)
- Teenagers Expectations/Parents Expectations (20 Minutes – Michelle)
- Consequences – Natural – Logical (20 Minutes – Eamonn)
- **Homework** - What do you do for your child?

## Session five

### (20 minutes – Michelle)

- Review of the week
- Use of the model
- How has communication changed (TA model)

### (20 minutes – Eamonn)

- Review of the homework – What you do for your teenager?
- Entitlements V's Consequence

### (30 minutes – Michelle)

- Consequences – Natural versus Logical
- 'What if' Plan

### Break (11.10am – 11.30am)

### (20 Minutes – Veronica)

- Evaluation sheets

### (20 minutes – Eamonn)

- **Handout** – Connecting with you teenager – 10 minutes
- Parenting Styles

### (20 minutes – Michelle)

- Past Experience of Parenting
- **Homework** – Name one thing you would like to do together. (Look at to do's on connecting with your teenager)

# Power2Change - Parents' sessions

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## Session six

**(20 minutes – Eamonn)**

- Review and recap
- How has communication changed/Improved
- TA model
- IESCAPE Model
- Examples

**Exercise – ‘Connecting with your teenager’ (10 minutes)**

**(20 minutes – Michelle)**

- Past Experiences of Parenting/being parented

**(20 minutes – Eamonn)**

- Parenting Styles

**Break**

**(20 minutes – Michelle)**

- What is abusive behaviour?
- What would a respectful relationship look like?

**Exercise - Active listening exercise (20 minutes)**

**NB – Do one nice activity with your teenager this week**

## Session seven

**(20 minutes – Eamonn)**

- Review and Recap
- **Homework** – How did it go?
- How has communication changed/Improved
- TA model
- IESCAPE Model
- Examples

**(20 minutes – Michelle)**

- What is abusive behaviour?
- What would a respectful relationship look like?

**Exercise - Active Listening exercise (20 minutes)**

**Tea Break and video work**

- Look at Teenager responses (30 minutes)
- Discuss how the videos went (15 minutes)
- Assertiveness test (15 minutes)

# Power2Change - Parents' sessions

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## **(30 minutes - all)**

- What is Assertiveness?
- What is Aggressiveness?

## **Guidelines for Assertive Behaviour**

### **Session eight**

#### **(20 minutes – Eamonn)**

- Review and Recap
- How has communication changed/Improved
- TA model
- IESCAPE Model
- Examples

#### **(20 minutes – Michelle)**

- Have you noticed any positive changes in your relationship?

#### **(30 minutes – Eamonn)**

- Self-esteem
- What is it?
- What Drains Self-esteem?
- What builds Self-esteem?
- Impact of Self-esteem on Parents?
- Impact of Self-esteem on Teenagers?

#### **Tea Break and Video work – Michelle 30 minutes**

#### **(20 minutes – Veronica)**

- Evaluation forms

#### **(20 minutes – Michelle)**

- Maslow's hierarchy of needs (if time)

#### **(20 minutes – Eamonn)**

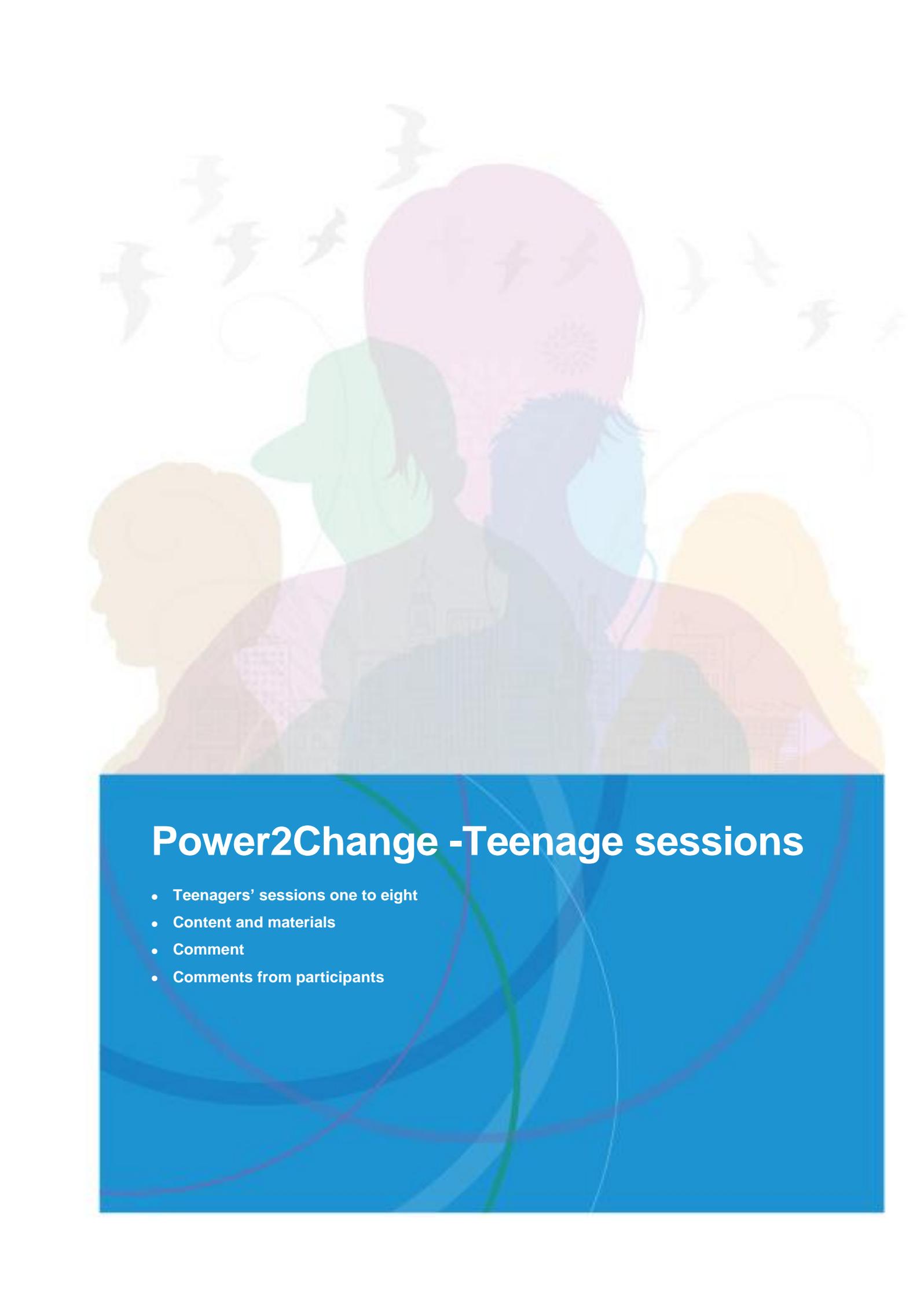
- How can we look after ourselves?
- Who can we look to for support to maintain change?

# Power2Change - Parents' sessions

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## Summary

- Time constraints meant we were not able to cover all of the topics mentioned but we did cover the most relevant and important. The parents got a lot out of reflecting and discussing the dynamics in the house – particularly how they responded to specific scenarios – all the time using the communication model (TCI graph and IESCAPE model).
- As we were compacting 10 weeks into eight we had to be specific about what we wanted in the programme. We did have to pick and choose exercises according to the needs and ability of our group.



# Power2Change - Teenage sessions

- Teenagers' sessions one to eight
- Content and materials
- Comment
- Comments from participants

# Power2Change - Teenage sessions

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## Teenage sessions (completed by Ewa Halat and Cyril Dully – Independent Facilitators)

Having agreed the general outline and purpose of the programme we were given sufficient leeway to use a dual approach that would:

- Explore the dynamics of domestic abuse and the consequences of such behaviour on the individuals and their parents, siblings etc.
- The power of our mind and how it can be harnessed to bring about positive changes for ourselves and others.
- Change our beliefs, change our behaviour.
- We were aware of the short duration of the programme and the level it needed to be pitched at to enable the participants to obtain the maximum benefit. Our approach would be flexible, non-judgemental, treating the young people with dignity and respect. We hoped to use humour as a means of involving the young participant in the process. It is difficult to be angry if one is laughing.
- An ability to laugh at oneself can help to dissipate anger.

### Session one

This involved the introduction of the programme, the ground rules and the group agreement. As was to be expected the participants were cautious of each other and ourselves and so we steered the sessions towards the wonderful power of our minds and the potential we all have.

We introduced the concept of self-talk, how we all talk to ourselves, what we say to ourselves, how much of what we say is positive/negative.

We introduced the concept of 70,000 thoughts a day. We introduced the role of our conscious and subconscious (Iceberg) and how we learn to behave in certain ways.

To reinforce the importance of self talk, the participants were asked to write down 3 positive and 3 negative things about themselves. Reinforce the idea that we need to strike a balance between praising ourselves and running ourselves down.

Who is your best friend exercise was used to emphasise the importance of positive self talk.

### Session two

As a follow on we introduced a number of exercises around the principal of lock in lock out.

By focusing on one thing we may miss something else. Are we focussing on the positive or negative? Are we getting the whole picture? Have we learned to react in a certain way or is there a better alternative.

### Session three

The participants were more relaxed with one another and within the group. At this stage we identified the different types of abuse and emphasised that abuse is learned behaviour (it may have got you what you wanted at some stage) and there are gains and losses.

We introduced the roles and responsibilities of both parents/teenagers and the consequences of allowing anger to fester.

The participants were able to identify the different types of abuse and the consequences of such actions. Again we reinforced the idea that abusive behaviour is learned behaviour. It is not a medical condition, it is not hereditary and it can be replaced by more appropriate behaviour. At this stage we introduced the idea of how you would like things to be at home.

# Power2Change - Teenage sessions

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## Session four

Participants had been given feedback from parents. This session focussed on a number of issues that influence behaviour, identifying feelings and emotions. We examined the power of words in building self image and what you might say to your parents to increase happiness. Compliments and the role they play in building self image. At this stage we introduced the Power and Control Wheel and examined the consequences of both. Some time was spent on the rules of fair arguing (handout).

## Session five

This session examined the impact of our behaviour on others, negative thinking, negative self talk and its impact on our behaviour. We used the 9 dot exercise to emphasise how and what we say to ourselves can affect our behaviour e.g. 9 dot exercise. Can't be done. I give up.

## Session six

This session looked at how we communicate self talk. The 24hour no put downs challenge. The importance of self-talk in building self image.

## Session seven

We continued the theme of how we communicate. We explored the Power of Words. Words trigger – pictures – trigger feelings/emotions.

Now it is important to be able to express our feelings. We introduced the Anger Funnel and the importance of built up anger and abuse.

## Session eight

We looked at behaviour types, direct aggression, indirect aggression, passivity, assertiveness. We examined body language (role play) ways to ask for what we want.

Participants were asked to convey positive comments/compliments about other group members. Wrap up.

## Content and materials

The content and materials used were drawn from a wide range of sources. Materials for violence abuse were sourced from:

- Move Ireland, Move Thirteen Step Programme, The Changes Programme - David Moran and Monica Wilson, Respect UK.
- Personal Development elements were sourced from Investment in Excellence and The Pacific Institute Inc. Pathways to Excellence, The Pacific Institute Inc.
- The Power of Your Subconscious Mind - Murphy Joseph 1963

## Comment

The positive outcome of this interventions are a direct result of the level of commitment and nurturing provided by the staff of Treo Nua in Tuam – Karyn, Sylwia and Fiona and the Family Support Service, Tuam, Michelle and Eammon.

## Comments from the participants:

“What lies behind us and what lies ahead of us is only a small part of what lies within us”

“It's been an honour working with you and thanks for your honesty, bravery and the laughs”.

To Oswald and Veronica: “It's been a pleasure”.



# Power2Change and Creativity

- Creative sessions
- Video conversation technique
- Teenagers' reward trip
- Parents' reward dinner
- Concluding ceremony

# Power2Change and Creativity

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## Creative sessions (completed by Karyn Cronin, Treo Nua)

Initially, the intention was to provide a creative workshop along the lines of the Break4Change programme, maintaining a link between the therapeutic workshop content and the creative workshop. However, given the low levels of self-esteem, exposure to trauma and social isolation amongst the target group, facilitators involved had to recognise that the young people were unable for any more than one hour dedicated to focusing on violent and aggressive behaviour, given the memories and feelings invoked and we felt instead this space needed to become a space where the young people, some of whom were attempting to control their own behaviours in the face of ongoing aggressive/inappropriate behaviour by adults in their world, could let off steam, be creative and competitive, bond as a group and build their confidence and self-esteem. Given that this element of the programme changed course from the initial intention there was a lot of learning which would be beneficial again.

- Creative part needs more structure and less distractions, there cannot be any other options, e.g. sports equipment etc. to the activity on offer, however a different activity every week could be offered, and it must be acknowledged that the target group were extremely low in self-esteem so trying different activities could help to maintain their interest while building self-esteem and social skills. This would be much easier to accommodate when we have our new premises.
- Any creative facilitator involved needs to assume the authority in order for the young people to respond to them in that way, the young people involved in the Power2Change programme can be challenging, the facilitators chosen need to be skilled in dealing with challenging behaviour and responding to it in as firm a manner as other facilitators.
- A structured plan needs to be in place before the programme begins and this can of course be adapted to the needs of the group as the programme progresses.
- The food offered needs to vary week by week, even when they love a type of food the young people themselves expressed a wish for the food offered to vary and bringing them in to order their own food on occasion was empowering as well as an informal way to build confidence, life skills and friendships.
- Flexibility is needed re creative ideas
- Functions of creative sessions – essentially to:
  - build self-esteem
  - encourage peer support
  - soothe and settle difficult feelings and emotions invoked during intense personal reflection before returning home

## Video conversation technique

The video conversation technique was a very powerful element that was modelled on Break4Change and in our experience, fundamental to the programme. However, had we tried to suggest the footage be used in any way other than to facilitate communication between parent and child, due to privacy and self-esteem issues, this element would have been a non-runner. We used it as follows:

- Fundamentally a video conversation between child and parent which was weaved into the 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> session
- Creating a safe environment for communication.
- We filmed young people and parents ourselves and it was the trust-based relationship they had with us that persuaded them to agree to the filming such were the levels of low self-esteem and vulnerability.
- Not face to face = less heat, less conflict
- Building empathy
- Encouraging acceptance (person not the behaviour)

# Power2Change and creativity

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- Trust is key, it is important to be clear and honest; why are you asking to video participants? What do you want?
- To achieve? Who will see the footage? What happens to the footage after the programme?
- Honouring the trust placed in the workers was fundamental. Video process was to facilitate a conversation between child and parent, only their own parent/child would be watching them, after the programme the footage was deleted as promised.
- Emotional support: video work was emotionally intense individual work and young people and parents needed emotional support as feelings and emotions were invoked. As the programme team were the people involved in the video conversation process we were well placed to provide such emotional support.

## Camera work schedule

<b>Session 5</b>	'Young People watch Parents responses
<b>Session 6</b>	Questions asked to Parents and Young People
<b>Session 7</b>	Responses shown to Parents and Young People
<b>Session 8</b>	Record Young People and Parents feelings about the course

## Teenagers reward trip

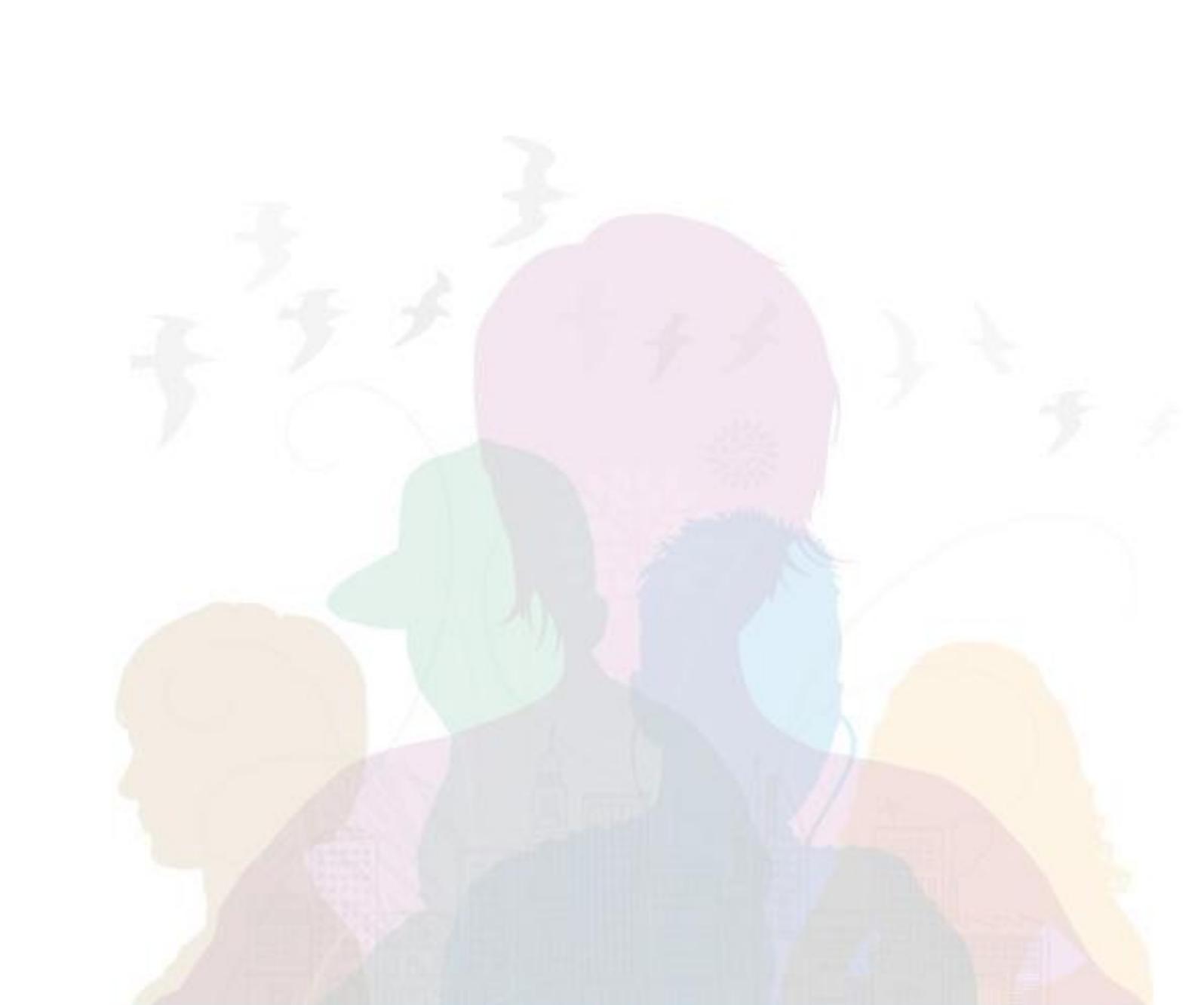
- Petersburg Outdoor Education Centre was the ideal trip for this group, the workers there had the right balance of authority and fun, the place itself had the physical challenges coupled with a peaceful, beautiful setting and the physical activities had the right balance of challenge, fun and team building opportunities for every member of the group.
- The trip did wonders for the self-esteem of the group, but it took the programme to get them to a stage where they were in any way able to go on a trip, be respectful, cooperative, appreciative and just have fun as young people.

## Parents' reward dinner

Initially as facilitators we thought a morning with massage/reiki/relaxation would be very welcome by the parents and suggested same. However we made it clear it was their decision and they opted to dine out for a group meal. They all made a great effort to dress up for same and seemed to really enjoy the evening.

## Concluding ceremony

- It was good for everyone to introduce themselves so that young people and parents could put faces to names and see who they were trusting to work with their young person/parent.
- A slideshow of images and words from the programme facilitators and participants worked well as it was serious but also funny and gave a good sense of the programme as a whole.
- Young people and parents awarding other people's children or parents the certificates was very beneficial. It made it much easier for the parties involved.
- The food was the right balance to keep adults and young people happy and it was very important to have a congratulations cake.



# Power2Change: Outcomes, Learning and Evaluation

- Outcomes for Parents and Teenagers
- Parents and young people's testimonies
- Learning outcomes for professionals
- Patterns of note
- Evaluation and value for money
- Case vignettes
- What's next

# Power2Change - Outcomes, Learning and Evaluation

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## Outcomes for Parents

- 'This works': Parents noticed changes halfway through the Programme.
- Took blame out of the situation – looked for positive ways to deal with violence and physical aggression.
- An understanding of healthy vs. unhealthy relationships and rights and responsibilities
- Changes in their own behaviour and attitude towards their children
- Improved communicative ability, most notably listening skills
- Increased confidence and self-esteem of parents
- Consistency in parental approach
- Increased coping skills
- Decreased intensity of physical episodes at home
- Increased informal social support for parents
- Improved relationships with children

## Outcomes for Teenagers

- An understanding of healthy vs. unhealthy relationships and rights and responsibilities
- Friendships
- Peer support
- A sense of not being alone with this issue
- Increased communication skills
- Increased self-esteem
- Increased social ability
- Hope for future
- Improved relationships with parents
- Ongoing support following the programme
- Referrals to various supports for vulnerable teenagers

## Parent and Young People testimonials

**'It was brilliant, meeting with other parents in the same boat and realising you are not on your own, it has really helped.'**

**'I've really enjoyed it, I felt like I was losing myself and I feel empowered now with some tools to help me with the challenges ahead.'**

**'More communication, more of a bond, more affection.'**

**'I've built a relationship with my child, and we talk a lot more.'**

**'It has encouraged me to be calmer, and talk to my child and listen to him and he has come around in being able to approach things more quietly rather than in temper.'**

**'There have been a lot of changes. The relationship between me and my mam has improved.'**

**'We are talking more, things are quieter now, I do feel I'm being heard now.'**

# Power2Change - Outcomes, Learning and Evaluation

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## Learning outcomes for professionals

- Domestic Violence can have a major impact on children/teenagers – lasting effect on self-esteem and coping skills.
- It must be acknowledged that young people exhibiting aggressive/violent behaviour may be reacting to such behaviour in their presence, or towards them, in past or present context. (Learnt behaviour)
- There was a lot of frustration at 'not being heard' amongst young people who were behaving aggressively at home.
- When parents improved communication skills and listening ability- this had a major impact regarding young people feeling 'heard' and reducing aggressive outbursts
- Young people behaving aggressively/violently wanted better relationships with their parents.
- Young people felt valued by their parent committing to attending a programme specifically to help make their relationship better
- A programme response to Child to Parent Violence is of merit because the peer support was really valued by young people and parents
- If an alternative future is offered, young people and families will buy in (higher than average consistent attendance).
- Honesty and integrity by programme team is key
- Aggressive/violent behaviour by children towards parents can be changed
- When aggressive/violent behaviour is named and examined in more detail, communication between the parties involved can be improved and strategies can be put in place by the young people and the parents/carers to recognise when a situation is escalating and reduce the potential risk of harm.
- Follow up support for participants is essential
- Value for money
- Recommendation -The Programme needs more time – facilitating change and personal development takes time and ongoing input from services.

## Patterns of note

The economic background of families involved was mixed between those on social welfare and working parents, however the family circumstances were predominantly where biological parents were no longer living together; only one family unit comprised two biological parents, the remainder were predominantly lone mother family units or one biological parent parenting with non-blood related partners as an element of family life. This included stepparents and parents of siblings. Most children of lone mother family units had some contact with biological fathers also.

# Power2Change - Outcomes, Learning and Evaluation

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## Evaluation (completed by Veronica Byrne)

The pilot programme was independently evaluated by a psychology student of National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG) under the tutelage of University teaching staff and below is a summary of her findings:

- Changes were detected in global measure of change, SCORE, family difficulties, family functioning (for parents) and self-esteem (Parental/Home self-esteem) for young people
- Limitations were: small sample size, lack of control group, time limited intervention period and the importance of clinical significance.
- This research revealed small but meaningful changes for parents and young people across domains of family functioning, parental stress, self-esteem and global change following completion of the Power2Change programme.
- This evaluation serves as a pilot investigation of the Power2Change Programme as a Youth to Parent Abuse response in an Irish Context.
- Given the prevalent and silent nature of YPA (Youth to Parent Abuse) and the psychological impact that YPA has both in the present and in the future in terms of patterns of abuse it is essential that further research continues to evaluate and develop interventions to address this complex family difficulty.

## Value for money (completed by teenager facilitator Cyril Dully)

We calculated the potential savings an intervention such as this may bring using the Family Savings Calculator – developed by the Family Intervention Project evaluation programme (UK) used to calculate the savings achieved through a project averting certain adverse outcomes in life and the 'Ready Reckoner' (UK) - used to calculate the Cost of Violence to Women and Girls using the metric of criminality.

(Strength to Change: Return on Investment Study, Perfect Moment 2010)

### **€12,000**

- Reduction in Criminality = €96,000
- Savings to the Health Service = €108,000
- Savings to Public Agencies = €420,000
- Savings in Human and Emotional Costs = €576,000

**Total = € 1,200,000**

### **€20,000**

- Reduction in Criminality = €160,000
- Savings to the Health Service = €180,000
- Savings to Public Agencies = €700,000
- Savings in Human and Emotional Costs = €960,000

**Total = €2,000,000**

## Case vignettes

### **Family A: Mother and 3 children Family unit**

This mother had recently separated and she is now parenting alone with three children. Her 11 year old son had started to act up and mother relayed some incidents where he had physically challenged her. Mother is insightful and had a good handle on her children but had lost all confidence since the break-up. The 11 year old would have seen his father's controlling behaviour at home in the past – he still sees Dad and when he stays with him his behaviour has deteriorated on his return. Mother attended the programme without child due to young age of child.

Since the course, mum said she felt 'a lot more confident' in her parenting skills. Prior to the programme the child had been referred to psychological services due to his aggressive behaviour however following the programme his behaviour had improved to such an extent that this referral was deemed to be no longer necessary.

### **Family B: Mother and 3 children unit, additional 2 children in foster care**

Lone Mother, living on social welfare. Referred to the programme due to a very aggressive dynamic between mother and her 13 year old boy and 15 year old girl at home. The level at which the family interacted at an aggressive and derogatory level was very striking. It was the most extreme case. Mum's last partner was very violent and controlling and the children were exposed to this to a point where he was physical with mum and the 15 year old girl also. During the course social work continued to be involved due to the level of aggression in the family. Mother was quite emotional during the video sessions – expressing to both children that she loved them. They talked also about how they loved their mother but wanted things to change. It was powerful for this family.

Since the course, the family dynamic has improved. They do not interact in such a derogatory manner and family meetings are the forum issues are discussed and worked out. Both the boy and the girl have voiced how much better things are at home and how the programme has made such a difference in the home environment.

### **Family C: 2 Parents and 1 child family unit**

This father called family services looking for help for his 15 year-old daughter. She had been refusing to go to school and when parents challenge her aggressive and violent incidents have occurred. These occurred between mother and the girl for the most part. We had advised it would be better if mum attended the course also but she would not attend. Dad attended it every week, rearranging work to be able to attend.

During the course of the programme, information came to light which high-lighted that particular supports were needed for the girl and she therefore did not continue the programme however the father completed it and found it a great source of support. Dad was very articulate and expressed his feelings of love for his daughter also in the video. He said that his own confidence had improved and also that he was bringing the messages of the course to his wife in order to help her react in a more appropriate manner.

### **Family D: Mother, stepfather and 4 children family unit**

Mum is the mother of a 15 year old boy who has attacked his step father during arguments. The referral would have stated past history of inappropriate discipline methods being carried out on 15 year old – very authoritarian. 15 year old had a very fractious relationship with his stepfather and relationship with mother was difficult because mother would side with partner during arguments. Mum did not complete the course due to an opportunity to return to employment however it was felt that stepfather needed the course more. Stepfather did not complete the course but had a light bulb moment halfway through that enabled him to parent more appropriately and respectfully and he voiced that he had got what he needed from the programme. The boy completed the programme.

Over the course of the programme the stepfather admitted to missing the relationship he used to have with the boy and the boy voiced that he thought mum and stepdad didn't like him anymore. The video conversation technique gave this family an important opportunity to communicate respectfully and truthfully in a way that dispelled particularly harmful perceptions and gave them an opportunity to start anew. Feedback following the course confirms that there has been a very significant continued improvement in the family environment and relationships have improved.

# Power2Change - Outcomes, Learning and Evaluation

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## What's next?

We are considering running another programme but we have to consider how we are going to do this. Firstly, the pilot programme has addressed this issue with affected families within the target area therefore it may take some time to build up a sufficient number of families requiring assistance with this specific issue within the relatively small target area to ensure an effective programme, therefore it may be more effective to run the programme in a different target area, one which has not yet had an effective response to this issue, and therefore has a significant number of affected families however the same personnel may not be in a position to be freed up to facilitate the course. There is also the issue of funding the cost of the course, which, though carried out on a relatively low budget, would take time and resources to secure however the independent facilitators are available and willing and the entire team unit believe strongly that this programme response is an effective and powerful response to a distressing and worrying issue.

An audit of CPV families linked with Family Services in the Galway area was carried out by Michelle Moran and there is evidence that there is sufficient numbers to carry out the programme again in the County; however the issues above still apply.

As facilitators, we are looking at presenting the Power2Change Programme at

- The National Children Services Committee Conference taking place in November 2014.
- At a MOVE (Men Overcoming Violence) Seminar taking place in December 2014.
- At a Youth Justice Seminar to take place in early 2015.