

YOUTH WORK LEARNING FESTIVAL



Focus: Youth Work Learning Festival



Funded by: Focus Foundation

Reported by: Carly McAllan, Project and Partnership Coordinator at YouthBorders.



Background

In April 2023, YouthBorders hosted a Youth Work Learning Festival that supported youth work practice in the Scottish Borders. YouthBorders offered a free day filled with multiple, short training workshops, plenary sessions, and informative market stalls open to volunteers and youth workers (see appendix 1 for full agenda). This was a great opportunity for participants to gain knowledge, share skills and make new connections. This festival was open to members and non-members of YouthBorders and was funded by the Focus Foundation.

In total, 40 participants, from 15 different YouthBorders member organisations, attended the Youth Work Learning Festival. YouthBorders invited 8 organisations to deliver workshops throughout the day. Participants were given the choice of three workshops to take part in throughout the day (see page three).

YouthLink Scotland delivered a plenary activity centered around the National Youth Work Outcomes and Skills framework. The session ignited some interesting discussion around the principles underpinning successful youth work and participants were able to discuss and share their different approaches towards youthwork outcomes and the skills framework.

YouthBorders and Youth Scotland also delivered a plenary session on 'Making the Most of Membership'. This provided a platform to share how groups are currently accessing support and services from YouthBorders and Youth Scotland. In addition, participants were encouraged to outline other support participants are interested in moving forward.

The following organisations provided a market stall with information during lunch time:

- Eat Sleep Ride
- Youth Voice/Young Scot
- Youth Parliament
- Youth Scotland
- Borders Additional Needs Group
- Borders Youth Theatre
- Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre
- Alchemy Film and Arts
- Connecting Threads
- Borders Women's Aid
- Borders Youth Local Action Group
- YouthBorders



About YouthBorders

YouthBorders is the network of voluntary and community-based youth organisations in the Scottish Borders, supporting and promoting good quality youth work. As a membership organisation YouthBorders facilitates networking opportunities and events, and provides information and advice to organisations, their volunteers, trustees, youth workers and other partners in the community. YouthBorders is recognised regionally as the strategic voice of third sector youth organisations and works closely with partners in the public sector to improve outcomes for young people.

| Workshops Delivered (20 mins each) | Description |
|--|---|
| Alchemy Film and Arts: An Introduction to Creative Filmmaking in Youth Work | An introduction to creative filmmaking in youth work. A quick look at free video editing apps and some activities that you can do with them. These could be as simple as filming a trip or as all-encompassing as encouraging creative expression. |
| Developing Youth Practice: Introduction to Working with Challenging Behaviour | This workshop will introduce you to some highly practical and useful ideas to help you work with difficult and challenging behaviour. We will cover with 2 fundamental concepts from Choice Theory (William Glasser) - 1) Exploring Quality Worlds to enable you to quickly build strong rapport and relationships; 2) Understanding basic needs to help you understand the reason why challenging behaviour happens. |
| Connecting Threads: Engaging young people with the River Tweed | An introduction to Connecting Threads, a cultural project connecting people to the river Tweed through creativity. Followed by a practical session, using river-related materials to inspire people to form their own creative response to the river, using paper, pens, pencil and charcoal. The aim of this activity is to give youth workers and leaders a taste of the type of activities that we run, and to talk through how this might benefit young people. This session will be of interest to people who want to learn more about how tapping into creativity can build skills and confidence. |
| BANG: Autism in Youth Work | This workshop will give an insight into Autism through the 'lens of young people'. This is an opportunity to increase your awareness and access free resources to support youth workers in promoting inclusion in all youth settings. |
| Eat Sleep Ride: Awakening the senses | In a fast-paced world, we often struggle with the time and motivation to engage in self-care activities. We want to teach a short exercise that can be brought into your daily routine. It practices being present and, in the moment, noticing where you place your attention and reflecting on your thoughts. It allows the opportunities and space to think of a situation in your life that needs a solution, and using this simple exercise, create a response from the heart and gut. |
| Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre: Engaging young people in conversation about consent | Conversation not debate – engaging young people in chat around Consent through exploration of common myths around sexual activity. The session will explore the commonly held myths regarding sexual activity from a young person's perspective and practical tips to take these conversations forward. It will also introduce the SBRCC NO Excuses youth worker training on Consent and Healthy Relationships. |
| Branching Upwards: 'Mindful Moments' - Nature Connection to Support Well-being | Research shows that people who are more connected with nature are usually happier in life and more likely to report feeling their lives are worthwhile. Nature can generate many positive emotions, such as calmness, joy, and creativity and can facilitate concentration. Spending time in green space or bringing nature into your everyday life can benefit both your mental and physical wellbeing. We aim to give you a few quick and easy ways to connect with the natural world and help you disconnect from the stresses and worries of life, which you can use with your families or your service users. |
| Andrew Shields: Digital Safety | Crash course on how to effectively use social media platforms and the safety features you can put in place to educate and use safely for all organisations. With the short timescale we will cover the small aspects around social media and how to utilise it for youth work. |

Feedback from Participants

Participants learned new useful skills and took away some ideas which could be applied within their own context of youth work. Some feedback from participants are presented below:

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>"Good introduction to training and ideas which we can then find out more about."</i> | <i>"Great sessions, left me wanting more."</i> |
| <i>"Youth work outcomes and skills – intro was useful – shared language."</i> | <i>"Would like more social media training."</i> |
| <i>"It was good to learn about creative projects based in the Borders e.g River Tweed."</i> | <i>"Interesting and informative, very enjoyable."</i> |
| <i>"Skill sharing and developed new ways of working."</i> | <i>"Generating new ideas and concepts."</i> |
| <i>"Lovely venue, well looked after with food and refreshments, lovely people, lots to learn, nice way to spend a Saturday."</i> | <i>"Well thought out and presented sessions."</i> |
| <i>"Excellent networking opportunities for all youth workers."</i> | <i>"It should become an annual event! Maybe in a different area each time."</i> |
| <i>"Will be looking out for further courses – a good positive experience."</i> | <i>"Very positive atmosphere, great location, space and food was amazing."</i> |
| <i>"Good variety of short sessions."</i> | <i>"Staff were friendly and approachable, very helpful, well looked after, thank you."</i> |

Learning / Next Steps

- YouthBorders will ensure additional time is set for participants to enjoy the market stalls throughout the day instead of during the lunch break.
- Feedback from participants highlighted that the workshops could have benefitted from having additional time at the end for participants to ask trainers any questions etc.
- The venue and location of the festival were highly rated however, YouthBorders will consider different locations around the Scottish Borders for future events.



YouthBorders is a Company Ltd by Guarantee with Charitable Status: SC313338. Scottish Charity Number: SC037680

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Appendix 1: Agenda

Focus: Youth Work Learning Festival

Saturday 22nd April 2023, 10 – 3pm

Tweed Horizons Business Centre, St Boswells, TD6 0SG



We look forward to welcoming you to our Youth Work Learning Festival, supporting youth work practice in the Scottish Borders. We are offering a free day filled with multiple training workshops and informative market stalls where you can gain knowledge, share skills and make new connections. This festival has been funded by the Focus foundation.

| Time Slot | Agenda |
|-----------|---|
| 09.45am | Registration Open, Tea & Coffee |
| 10.15am | Welcome and Introduction |
| 10.30am | Group Activity: YouthLink Scotland - National Youth Work Outcomes and Skills Framework. |
| 11.15am | 1st Short Sessions with 4 options to choose from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alchemy Film and Arts: <i>An Introduction to Creative Filmmaking in Youth Work</i>• Developing Youth Practice: Introduction to Working with Challenging Behaviour• Borders Additional Needs Group: <i>Youth work and autism</i>• Connecting Threads: <i>Engaging young people with the river Tweed</i> |
| 11:45pm | 2nd Short Sessions (4 options to choose from, the same sessions as above repeated). |
| 12.15pm | Lunch: Cindys Caribbean Street Food Market Stalls with YouthBorders member information and wider groups. |
| 01:15pm | Group Activity: YouthBorders/Youth Scotland - Making the most of membership |
| 02.00pm | 3rd Short Sessions (4 options to choose from) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eat Sleep Ride CIC: <i>Awakening the senses</i>• Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre: <i>Engaging young people in conversation about consent</i>• Andrew Shields: <i>Digital Safety</i>• Branching Upwards CIC: <i>'Mindful Moments' - Nature Connection to Support Well-being</i> |
| 02.30pm | Tea & Coffee Break |
| 02.45pm | Group Activity: Evaluation |
| 03.00pm | Closing remarks and finish |



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