

Get Reading, Get Better, Get Libraries

Take Control of Your Life for the Better!

This was a joint project between NPTC Group Powys Campuses and Powys Library Service. The events were held on Thursday 21 November 2013 Brecon and Wednesday 27 November 2013 Newtown.

The purpose of this project was to:

- **Raise the profile of life skills and self-help resources with NPTC Group Powys campuses and Powys Public Libraries.**
- **Raise awareness of mental health and well-being.**
- **Run Life Skills workshops**
- **Feel the benefits of laughter therapy**
- **Encourage mood-boosting through reading**
- **Give information on prescription Wales**
- **Get as many people as possible engaged with the events**
- **Encourage non users to join/use the libraries.**

Events:

2 events were held in Brecon on Thursday 21 November. The Public Library event was held in the morning and NPTC Group Library event in the afternoon. Life Skills and self-help resources were displayed at both events.

55 people took part in the events. I had arranged to link with the Health and Social Care students in the college, but other groups heard of the event and I was very pleased to welcome a mainly male IT group to join in, plus other students and staff. We had a wonderful trainer namely Sue Blower who had the students in fits of laughter in the laughter therapy session. As one student said, 'I never thought a library could be like this'. An IT student thanked the trainer for being allowed to attend as he had really enjoyed himself.

Healthy snacks were provided and quickly consumed.

2 events were held in Newtown on Wednesday 27 November using the same trainer. The College event was held in morning linking with the Health and social Care students. As

there were so many students who wanted to take part and not a lot of room we held 2 shorter sessions back to back. In all 60 students took part and enjoyed a very lively session followed by healthy snacks.



Students from NPTC Group enjoying a laughter and exercise session in the College library



NPTC Group students joining in the session with their trainer

The Public Library event was held in the afternoon where 15 people took part. Pont Hafren Drop in centre were invited and together with other people enjoyed the interactive session followed by the healthy snacks. A comment received was for more such events in the Public Library.



Participants in the Newtown Public Library session



A further insight into the sessions at the Public Library

Participants in all events were given stress balls or the Get Libraries bags that both the college and the public libraries already had therefore keeping expenditure down. Our trainer emphasised the benefits of using library resources for information, mood boosting, relaxation and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

In order to market the events within the college it was decided to make face to face contact with the targeted groups and the benefits of the workshop sessions discussed. Tutors and students were very enthusiastic so much so that we put on an extra session in Newtown and included an additional group in Brecon. The public library staff directly contacted the voluntary groups and put up posters. The successful of the events can be seen as due to a highly relevant subject, an excellent trainer and the supportive joint working relationship between the Public Libraries and the College in Powys. Due to the success of the events we are looking forward to engaging in further joint College library and Public Library projects.

Outcomes:

In all 130 people engaged in the project and were all extremely positive about the events.

- **The existing partnership working between NPTC Group and Powys Public Libraries has been strengthened and links forged with voluntary organisations.**
- **Awareness of self-help and well-being library resources has been raised**
- **New users attended the public libraries**
- **Student and tutor links within the college libraries have been strengthened**
- **Opened public and student awareness that the library is the place to be!**
- **As well as having a fun event, participants were given valuable tips on mood boosting and mental health awareness.**
- **Public Library and College staff joined in the events increasing their confidence through enjoyment of the sessions**