

Turning the Curve (EU Project)



improving the lives of children and young people with autism and their families and carers



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Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



HSC Southern Health
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HSC Western Health
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Project Scope/Focus

Scope

- ✦ Budget £1,1000.00 initially (now extended)
- ✦ 750 beneficiaries across the 4 partner areas
(currently WHT/SHT have 1963 (401 YP) + 15 Siblings

Focus

The project will support the (educational, vocational and social) transition needs of children and young people with Autism aged between 15 and 19 and their

Project Outcomes – all met

- ✦ Positive educational, vocational and social outcomes for target group
- ✦ Reduce isolation for ASD children and young people through social activities
- ✦ Introduce ‘respite’ provision for targeted families via social support to ASD child/young person
- ✦ Reduce levels of parental/sibling stress and anxiety
- ✦ Develop new partnerships between statutory and voluntary organisations in border areas

Additional Benefits - Young People

- ◆ Found a number of very talented young people - encouraged to take their gift forward (educationally, vocationally and socially)
- ◆ More active young people (taking exercise eg walking clubs)
- ◆ Young people who are now supporting and mentoring other young people with ASD (volunteering with project)
- ◆ Proactive young people exploring educational, vocational and social options themselves
- ◆ Young People have found like minded people to spend leisure time with that is organised without any support
- ◆ Measuring the journey made by the young people, all have indicated they are less stressed, are more confident, better organised and more comfortable making decisions
- ◆ Increased independence and decreased dependence from/on carers

Additional Benefits - Others

- ◆ Number of new networks for siblings, parents and other carers
- ◆ Families sign posted to relevant professionals via project staff reducing other family problems and are content there exists an element of support to them
- ◆ Improved family relationships
- ◆ Better informed employers (public and private eg DEL, HE), training providers, voluntary organisations, leisure activity organisations etc
- ◆ Staff design appropriate training – raising self-esteem of young people and Trust providing appropriate training (Focus groups)
- ◆ Better relationship between ASD Team and CAMHS Team
- ◆ Influenced provision of the Voluntary/Community sector to this age group of young people

External Evaluators Findings (Example)

For the service – impact

- ❖ Only 2 participants required input from a Clinical Psychologist (which represents only 2.6% of the project participants)
- ❖ One of the young people involved in the project was known to Tier 4 Mental Health, now in Tier 3. This young person engaged with the project and although continues to receive support from CAMHS this support is greatly reduced
- ❖ 4 Young people with ASD that had been known to CAMHS were subsequently discharged as they no longer required this service from CAMH
- ❖ No applications for additional support or direct payments to the Disability Panel from those involved in the project. (Historically 18.75% of those referred to the Disability Panel would be between the ages of 14 to 18)
- ❖ There were only 2 (which represents only 6.25%) cash grants required by or issued to the families of children and young people participating in the Project.

Not all was perfect

- ✦ Recruitment of Staff with relevant experience difficult
- ✦ Staff turnover (temporary positions)
- ✦ Parents poor at communicating occasionally family commitments – children not available
- ✦ Parents not prepared to provide transport
- ✦ Families involved requested the need for certain services and yet on a few occasions there were no participants eg sibling workshops

Project Closure

- ✦ In the final stages of project and the majority of young people opted to progress social support in a group settings (73%)
- ✦ Each family has a robust Exit Strategy based on the achievement of the objectives within the Transition Plan
- ✦ Partners are moving towards securing funding to mainstream all or parts of the project
- ✦ Collecting data for Final Report