

Work so far

Despite the ongoing difficulties caused by the pandemic, the Rose team have been very busy over Autumn. Our main task has been to think about and develop training for people with learning disabilities that we can deliver online.

We are still meeting once a month as a team on Zoom. The whole team now can join. Two mentors are supported at Reach Newark at these meetings and everyone else joins in from home. The Rose team would like to say a big 'thank-you' to Romany for helping run these meetings.

Usually, when we deliver face to face training to people with learning disabilities, we do a day session for four hours and then return after a few weeks for a further two hour session. Some of that time we spend on games and activities which we cannot replicate

online. However, we have managed to adapt our training so that we can deliver our key messages around staying safe in relationships in two online sessions, each one lasting about two hours. We realised longer sessions when working remotely are difficult for people to maintain their concentration and hard work for the mentors.

Our first online training like this was to a group of young people who use Space Inclusive, Nottingham. Their website explains what they do, ' We provide person-centred programmes for young adults with learning disabilities aged 18+ who have a personal budget. We offer practical real-life based activities that will support them in their transition from school or college into a sustainable adult life.'

Sara and Isobel were the mentors who delivered the sessions, supported by Kay. Unfortunately, Isobel was ill for the second session but Sara was brave enough to carry on without her. The training went well and we received some positive feedback, '...the participants all took something from the workshop and it felt both age appropriate and suited to the communication needs of the guys that took part...it would be great if we could work together again and we have more clients who would benefit.'



The Rose team were asked by Dr Claire Bates if they could do a webinar for the Supported Loving group. <https://www.choicesupport.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/supported-loving/what-is-supported-loving>

Fifty people attended our presentation on Zoom. Ricky Roo, Laura and Laila, supported by Kay and Bridget, presented. We concentrated on how we use The Ring of Safety in our work. You can see the webinar here. <https://vimeo.com/473349479>

As part of our work, we are working with family carers to help them understand how to help their relative have safe relationships. We have sent a questionnaire out to carer groups across Nottinghamshire to find out what they would like to know. This will help us prepare information sessions for family carers. We will end the survey in the middle of December.

In our last Newsletter we described the narratives we were preparing for our funders, the Samworth Foundation. In November Kay and Bridget attended a full day Zoom meeting with the team from Samworth and representatives from the other five projects in the Young Voices portfolio. We were pleased to hear that our narratives had been well received and they are going to be combined with narratives from other projects to make an interim report on what has been achieved so far.

In our narratives we wrote about the work of the steering group. This is group of people with knowledge of learning disabilities, healthy relationships and learning disability services in Nottinghamshire. There seven people on the steering group plus Rose staff and mentor representatives. Here are some comments from members of the steering group that we used in the narratives.

Julia Sandhu, Fundraising Director, Reach

‘Having a project steering group is really important. Firstly the involvement of a trustee and senior managers ensures that the project is firmly embedded within our strategic planning and delivery and that there engagement with the project across the organisation. Secondly, the steering group enables us to draw in external expertise which helps inform project activities but also raises the profile of our project and the charity as a whole – including with the local authority. Thirdly and most importantly it enables people with learning disabilities to have their voice, opinions and experiences heard and to influence the development of the project and, ultimately, policies and decisions beyond Reach. The mentors’ are trained to gather feedback from other mentors and people with learning disabilities who benefit from the project training; their participation in the steering group is fundamental because it means that decisions are informed by real-life experiences of people with learning disabilities in Nottinghamshire and they have the opportunity to communicate these experiences directly to the Reach board, SMT and a senior local authority representative.’



**Dr Deborah Kitson, CEO Ann Craft Trust
Rose Project Evaluator**

‘For any project it is really useful to have an established Steering Group that can assess progress of the project as well as share ideas and discuss overcoming any challenges that may arise. It gives the opportunity for a range of people with relevant expertise to contribute to the project. With a project such as Rose there is great value in ensuring that membership of the group also includes the mentors who are leading the work and whose voice is key to the project’s progress and success.’

The mentors' representatives so far have been Anna and Phil. They have done a brilliant job but from February two new mentors will take over the role. We will have elections in our December meeting. Thank you, Anna and Phil for all your input into these meetings.



We are now starting to think about how we are going to continue with this work when the project funding ends in the summer of 2022. We would welcome any information, suggestions or ideas of how we can sustain the work.

Our next newsletter will be in the Spring when we hope all our lives will be getting back to some sort of normal. We wish everyone a happy Christmas!

Here is Chelsea putting up her decorations!



In other mentor news, we would like to congratulate Lizzie on her marriage and we wish Mr and Mrs Green lots of happiness.



ROSE Stands for.....

- R**each – supports everyone working on the project
- O**ut – we are taking a message out to people
- S**top – we want to stop bad things happening
- E**xploitation – when some body uses somebody else badly to get what they want