

# PEST Project End of Year Project Report 2008/2009

## Introduction

This report gives an overview of year 3 of the PEST (Peer Education Skills Training Project) in terms of reviewing the proposed work plan against the actual outcomes of the project.

Year 3 has been the busiest year yet for PEST, with more requests than ever coming from organisations that are seeking support to carry out peer-led initiatives. As well as being the busiest year to date, the diversity of the topics that have been tackled through a peer-led approach has certainly been interesting to work with. I am also pleased to report that the young people that have been involved in PEST projects have themselves represented a broad spectrum of Scottish young people.

Following the feedback received on the format of previous reports, this report will follow a similar pattern. Each key task as set out in the PEST work plan is discussed including the numbers of project participants.

## Year 3 Key Tasks

**1. Facilitate and evaluate six training courses with 90 young people who will return to their organisations/communities and with the support of PEST staff, volunteers and other peer educators (both face to face and remotely) to share their learning experiences with up to 300 of their peers.**

Following the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Showcase event in June 2008, a number of contacts were made with new organisations from out with the Article 12 in Scotland network. The PEST Coordinator also distributed a 'Call for Partners' flyer in early September to advertise the services that PEST had to offer to organisations. This was very successful in reaching out to organisations that had previously not worked with PEST from areas of the country that PEST had not previously had a presence. As a result, a number of project proposals were discussed with the following organisations:

The Fostering Network  
Canongate Youth Project  
Save the Children – Young Gypsy/Traveller Project  
Save the Children – YES Project  
Debate Project at the Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum  
Donaldson's College  
Glasgow Association For Mental Health – Young Carer's Project  
Global Citizen Corp  
Midlothian Youth Platform  
NHS Western Isles  
Young Scot

Not all of the discussions resulted in a project proposal coming to fruition. Below are the details of the projects that resulted and the work that has taken place to date. Please note that several of the projects have not yet ended and will overlap into year 4, however, this will be clarified in the individual summaries.

- **Canongate Youth Project / Options +**

PEST began working with a group of 16 - 19 year olds at Canongate Youth Project in Edinburgh in November 2008. The young people are part of a programme called Options + which is a pre-employability programme that works with young people to develop their personal and social skill with a view to moving on to employment, education or training opportunities. The young people are referred to the programme if they find it difficult to engage with others, even at very basic level, which often presents as challenging behaviour. Due to this, PEST was required to make many short interventions over a longer period of time than usual to ensure that the training was being presented in a manageable and digestible way.

The broad theme of the project was identity. This theme was chosen as some of the young people had reported that they felt that Polish immigrants were the cause of their unemployment. It was felt that by exploring identity, attitudes could be challenged in a way where the issues could be discussed and links could be made to immigration in the past and the reasons behind why people migrate today.

During December and January, the group took part in weekly sessions looking at a variety of themes including Peer Education, European Citizenship, Discrimination, Communication Skills and Family Histories. The group decided to make a short film based on the sessions and the topic of identity. On the last weekend of January, the group went on a residential to the Innerwick Outdoor Centre just outside Dunbar in East Lothian with the aim of learning basic film skills and starting to storyboard their film idea.

The group filmed and edited their film with the assistance of staff from CLAN, a literacy support project in Edinburgh. The film broadly looks at the mixed identities of Edinburgh and the influence of multiculturalism in the city. The group presented their work at this year's Showcase event and discussions are taking place around developing the film into a resource that can be used with other young people.

- **Save the Children**

The PEST project was approached by two projects of Save the Children in Scotland to work with young people that had experience of being peer educators within Save the Children programmes. The two projects were: the Young Gypsy/Traveller Project, which worked with young Gypsy/Travellers from across Scotland around the theme of discrimination and the YES Project, a community youth project based in Glasgow's East End, an area of high social deprivation.

The two groups were brought together at a residential that took place at the end of October 2008 at Sport Scotland in Largs. The aim of the work was to 'capture' the experiences of the young people and their knowledge of being involved in peer-led initiatives so that this could be put into a leaflet / poster resource to be given to young people that were thinking of becoming peer educators or developing a peer-led initiative.

Unfortunately, the work was not completed as Save the Children withdrew funding support from both projects as part of a wider change of priorities for the whole organisation. As a result, both projects closed at the end of March.

However, Article 12 in Scotland has recently picked up the work with young Gypsy/Travellers and PEST is working with them to support this new work. More information on this is noted later in this report. The idea for the peer educator guide that was the basis of the original proposal with Save the Children may now be picked up by PEST as part of the peer education resource manual that is to be produced in the 4th project year.

- **Global Citizen Corp**

The Global Citizen Corp is an initiative of the Mercy Corp, an international development organisation that works in various developing countries and conflict zones across the world. The Global Citizen Corp is very popular in the United States and has recently been introduced to Scotland. The aim is to recruit young people, give them training on global and local issues and provide support so that they can take action in their communities. A training weekend was held in Edinburgh on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of February. PEST delivered a 2-hour training session on Peer Education and the Rights of the Child, which consisted of a whistle-stop introduction to peer education and to the UNCRC.

The PEST coordinator is currently investigating the impact that the session had on the work that the young people undertook after the training weekend.

- **Donaldson's College**

Donaldson's is a school for young people who are deaf (deaf is used to cover Deaf, hard of hearing and deafened students) or have severe speech and language difficulties. It is based in Linlithgow in West Lothian.

A group of students planned and organised an Empowerment Residential for deaf young people from across Scotland which took place from the 13<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> of February. PEST provided support to the group to plan the event and attended the residential to co-facilitate a session on democracy with colleagues from West Lothian Council's Participation Network. The PEST Coordinator also attended on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February to do a presentation on Article 12 in Scotland and the PEST project.

As a result of this, a deaf young person has joined the Article 12 in Scotland Management Group. He is being supported by the PEST Coordinator to develop a deaf awareness session for his hearing peers.

Also, as a result of PEST involvement in the Empowerment Residential, a group of young people from Donaldson's decided to make a visual version of the 'Scottish Bust Card' (a wallet-sized card that explains your rights if stopped, searched or detained by the police). PEST alongside colleagues from Donaldson's worked with the young people on a weekly basis over a six week period to identify the main points from the 'Bust Card' that they wanted to get across to their peers. This included things like, "You should always give your correct name and address" and "If you are under 16, the police must call your parents or guardian". They then took photographs of each other signing the statements. The leaflet was entirely designed and formatted by the young people and has been distributed throughout Donaldson's and also to other organisations that work with deaf young people.

The PEST Coordinator is currently working with Donaldson's to apply for funding to make a subtitled and signed film version of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. If funding for this work is successful, the work will take place in the next school year.

- **Western Isles Smoking Prevention and Cessation Project**

This initiative was set up in partnership with the NHS Western Isles Health Promotion Department.

The aim of the project was to support the young people involved to develop a peer education workshop on smoking prevention and cessation to be delivered to their peers within schools in the next school year. In conjunction with the PEST training, a theatre company are due to be performing a show themed on smoking at various venues across the Western Isles during September 09.

PEST provided peer education training for two groups of young people in the Western Isles; one group consisted of young people from the northern islands of Harris and Lewis and the other group consisted of young people from the southern islands of North and South Uist and Barra. The first phase of the training took place during an eight day period at the end of March, with a further second phase that took place over two days in June.

The first phase of the training included an introduction to peer education and the role of a peer educator, survey research skills, communication skills and various activities looking at the topic of young people and smoking. A survey, developed by the young people, was distributed using *Survey Monkey* as well as being distributed at community based events to mark World No Tobacco Day at the end of May. The aims of the survey were to assess the level of knowledge amongst young people on the harmful effects of smoking, to find out their attitudes towards support that was available to them if they smoked and wanted to quit and to find out how young people prefer to receive information on the topic.

The aim of the second phase of training was to prepare the young people with the skills to deliver peer-led workshops and to develop the format of the workshops that the young people will deliver in schools and youth settings across the islands based upon the results of the young people's survey research. It is hoped that the information from the survey will also influence the future development of youth-specific smoking information resources by the Western Isles Health Board.

- **GAMH (Glasgow Assoc. Of Mental Health) Young Carers Group**

Work started with the young carers group during April and May 2009 with training sessions continuing throughout July and August. The aim of the work is a one-day event for other young carers in the Glasgow area on the topic of Young Carer's Rights. The particular slant of the work is looking at what services are doing to ensure that young carer's rights are fulfilled.

The one-day event – to be held during the forthcoming October school holidays - will feature the young people delivering sessions on rights issues for young carers including activities from 'UNCRC for Beginners' resource pack as well as facilitating a session to construct a charter of rights specifically for young carers. Relevant services will also be invited to attend to give young carers information about their service provision and support that is available to them.

- **Midlothian Youth Platform**

The Midlothian Youth Platform is the youth forum of Midlothian Council. The area of Midlothian includes the towns of Dalkeith, Gorebridge, Newtowngrange, Pencuik and Bonnyrigg.

This specific project group consists of 14 - 16 young people from across Midlothian, representing various schools and youth groups across the local authority area. The group was approached by Midlothian Council in February 2009 to carry out a consultation with their peers in schools and relevant youth groups that have 'additional support needs'.

The term 'additional support needs' is broad and covers not only young people that may require additional support for learning due to a physical disability or a learning difficulty, but also young parents, young carers, young people for whom English is a second language and young Gypsy / Travellers to name a few. With this in mind, this work presents its own specific challenges in terms of preparing the young people to work with other young people with such a wide range of different issues but it also has the potential to be a far reaching initiative that will include many groups that can be considered to be marginalised in the community.

The aim of the consultation is to assess whether or not enough is being done within mainstream schools to ensure that young people with additional support needs are having those needs met. The information from the consultation will be used by Midlothian Council to inform their 5-year Equalities Strategy that is due to be published later in the year.

Action planning and training sessions commenced in June following several preliminary meetings with representatives of Midlothian Council to discuss the initiative. As well as covering peer education training, the young people's training sessions will particularly look at creative consultation techniques, overcoming communication barriers and disability awareness.

In relation to the work plan, the numbers of project participants are as follows:

**Predicted number of participants:**

Core peer educators:	<b>90</b>
Multiplied:	<b>300</b>

**Actual number of participants:**

Core peer educators:	<b>122</b>
Multiplied:	<b>176</b>

**Additional project participants:**

Professionals:	<b>12</b>
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## **2. Organise national event that will:**

- 1. Enable participants to “showcase” and peer evaluate each others work and skills development**
- 2. Enable participants and project staff to evaluate the impact that the training has had at individual/peer group/ organisational/community level.**

The 3rd Annual PEST Showcase took place at The Melting Pot in Edinburgh on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2009. This event was attended by 30 individuals representing a cross-section of practitioners from 10 different voluntary and statutory agencies. Of the 10 organisations, 5 were new contacts i.e. organisations that PEST has not worked with previously. All 5 of these organisations indicated that they were interested in discussing project proposals with PEST which is very encouraging for year 4 of the project.

The programme for the event included PEST project presentations by young people and support workers from Canongate Youth Project, Donaldson’s College, Midlothian Youth Platform, Young Gypsy Traveller’s Lives and the Western Isles Smoking Prevention and Cessation Project.

Additionally, a DVD resource called “Don’t Judge Us” that features an input from the PEST Project Coordinator, Tara Fisher, was shown to highlight the benefits of using peer-led approaches, particularly in formal educational settings to promote cultural awareness.

The event was closed with final remarks from Alistair Allen MSP who represents the Western Isles.

The feedback from the event was excellent, with many people saying how much they had enjoyed the presentations and the variety of talent that was shown on the day.

## **3. Produce regular monitoring reports and an annual report to 1. Identify achievements, areas of concern and potential improvement and 2. Publicise the project to a wider audience.**

An End of Year Project Report is produced at the end of each year to compliment the Big Lottery End of Year Report. Quarterly updates are produced to be presented to the Article 12 in Scotland Management Group at their meetings. Project reports are produced at the end of each piece of work. These are not always written reports. Young people also take part in evaluations of their work using a system specially devised by PEST. They are also encouraged to evaluate their own peer-led sessions with other young people.

As part of our exit strategy we are currently undertaking survey research with staff from participating organisations to identify which elements of PEST work have been mainstreamed at organisational level. The outcomes of this research will be included in the final (year 4) project report.

An ongoing task of the PEST Coordinator is to organise meetings of the PEST Team, these meetings are recorded. The PEST Coordinator and her Line Manager have Skype, face-to-face meetings and an annual review meeting to discuss the progress of the project.

Publicity of the project is an ongoing task, as are most of the tasks above. To assist in publicising the project, the PEST Coordinator regularly attends Participation Network meetings and the Cross Party Group on Children and Young People as well as utilising the many e-networks that are in existence, for example, the Young Scot network.

For further information relating to the contents of this report, please contact Tara Fisher, PEST Coordinator by emailing [tara@article12.org](mailto:tara@article12.org)