

FULFILLING THEIR POTENTIAL CONFERENCE
MONDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2007

1. *Why involve young people in library service planning and delivery?*

- Provides young people at risk of social inclusion with a real say in their public library service.
- Encourages better use of the service and improves access to books and reading by those aged 11 to 19.

2. *How did the project achieve this?*

- Worked with teenage parents who:
 - (a) Helped redesign the children's area at West Swindon Library.
 - (b) At rhyme times at their Housing Association, it was suggested baby massage and health advice being part of the Families Love Libraries event at West Swindon Library.
- Worked with looked after children who:
 - (a) As part of the Focus Group run by the Youth Service and the Youth Forum contributed to the design of the teenage zone in the new Central Library, extending the size by 20%.
 - (b) Will contribute to plans for the teenage book bar, both in stock selection and development of services.

3. *Ongoing work*

- Rhyme times at the Housing Association continue.
- Accredited training course set up for young parents called "Getting Connected" – run in West Swindon Library.
- Increased membership and active use of the library by young people.

4. *Staff development and skills*

- Staff time has been a problem, as project running at the same time as a new library management system was installed, and move to the temporary Central Library.
- Work on the Book Bar will mean continuing engagement by staff and further training for staff in the new Central Library.
- Continuing work at West Swindon Library with young people.
- Capacity of professional staff to be involved further limited by other project work.

5. *Impact of project*

- Equalities – contributes to meeting equalities agenda in SBC.
- National profile:
 - NYA case study
 - Local MP attended Families Love Libraries event
- Local profile:
 - Mayor and councillors at Families Love Libraries event.
- Redesigned children's area at West Swindon Library.
- Teenage zone at the new Central Library will be much improved.
- Better partnerships developed with Youth Service, Housing Association, Children's Services looked after children department.

6. *Finally*

- Would not have been possible without the excellent project management and delivery of the project by Rebecca Bolton, one of our excellent librarians in Swindon.
- She has worked closely with Ciara to develop this project.
- Recently Rebecca and others working on the Partners for Change project were shortlisted for our Council's Equalities excellence award. I feel they should have won, but I am biased.

8. *Can you do it?*

- Like all authorities, Swindon's library staff are short of time, but it has happened.
- Most authorities have staff like Rebecca – very dedicated children's librarians. Heads of Service must support them in the work they do.
- So all that remains is to say YES, you can do it.

THANKS.