

Case Study

Amethyst

Small World Theatre

Background

The Amethyst project was a pilot project by Small World Theatre that worked with young people aged 9-18 experiencing issues around anxiety, depression, low mood, self-harm, suicidal ideation, low confidence and low self-esteem.

Delivery

The two-year programme developed different sessions for different age groups, as well as sessions for parents and families to build understanding of how to support children suffering from these issues. The unique tool kit of techniques helped explore their relationship with themselves and others, to identify barriers they face in their lives and look for positive solutions. The techniques included 'circle time' to build trust and listening skills; drama exercises and fun games to put participants at ease; looking at coping with anxiety, low mood and general emotional wellbeing; and raising awareness of mental health issues affecting young people through interactive bilingual performances.



Due to the Covid-19 lockdown, Amethyst had to adapt their activities, with sessions being delivered online. These sessions included the 14-18 age range Amethyst groups from the north and south of Ceredigion and Parent/Guardian sessions, which also resulted in more parents being able to attend. Whilst it meant an adaptation in activities, it remained important support for the young people, with one stating **"Online classes certainly aren't the same but they are definitely a place that I can look forward to. Everyone is supportive and understanding especially during this chaotic time."**

Impact

Engagement

Aged 9 - 11 years - **127**

Aged 12 - 18 years - **42**

Parents/Guardian - **23**

Young People engaged with through audience participation - **600**

Reflecting upon the benefits of the project, the results show that the wellbeing and mental health for participants in 12-18 old age groups have improved, significant awareness has been raised in improving wellbeing for junior school aged children and improved access to support and improved parenting skills for parent/guardian participants.

Positive results from Amethyst were also evident through the participants feedback:

"It's not only tactics that help with depression and anxiety, it helps with other things outside of the Amethyst Project like anger and stuff...It's not just the counsellors and workers, it's the other people who come to Amethyst that have been supportive."



"We're all here for similar reasons.. it's a very supportive place to be.. there's always a positive energy which is really helpful".

"Being in a group helped me with making friends online as well, I feel confident in talking in group chats.. I'm in a healthy mind space and I'm smiling a lot more, I really enjoyed the groups."

Parents/Guardians also saw the positive impact that the Amethyst project had on their children, with one stating:

"I have been looking for some parent support since last year when my daughter's mental health deteriorated and I found she was self-harming. She later attempted suicide. I wanted to hear how other parents coped with the stress of living with keeping a young person safe and also get ideas for how to support her. I asked at CAMHS but they didn't know of any other groups... Then I saw a poster for the Amethyst group and got in touch. I have found the weekly zoom meetings really useful - the first one I attended felt like a weight lifted off my shoulders".



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