Report for the Partnership Board

Relationships and Families

18th November 2015
Blue LIG

Basingstoke feedback for the Partnership Board on Relationships and Family

9th October 2015

Happy Club gave their views on the promises made in the Relationships and Family chapter of the Learning Disability Plan

Adult Services

8 people said they are supported to spend time with friends

Everyone feels they are given opportunities to see their boyfriend or girlfriend because there are plenty of groups that run, they are all happy about this
Health

No-one thinks there is enough advice about sexual relationships

If we want advice we would see our Doctor and ask to speak to the Health team, but the advice is only there if we ask for it

The group think there should be Health teams in all Doctors Surgeries, so they can speak directly to them, we don't always want to speak to our doctor first

Advocacy

Advocacy encourage us to speak up against anyone who doesn’t respect us, they help by the courses they run at groups

They help us to get the right help we need

Passenger Transport

The only information we were given about bus changes were small posters on buses behind the driver’s seat, which was too small to read and understand

There were also the new timetables at bus stops

I heard by word of mouth
**Wednesday Network** gave their views on the promises made under the relationships and family chapter of the Hampshire Learning Disability Plan

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**Health**

I see my friends at Tuesday Club and at work

I wish I could see my friends more often

We don’t see our friends as much as we’d like because we have different keyworkers

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**Passenger Transport**

If my transport ever changes my family or my support tell me

I came to Network by taxi not Dial-A-Ride, I don’t know why

I travel most places by taxi, which is ok
**Adult services**

I don't see enough of my friends, they don't go to the same places as me
I spend the evenings at home with my mum
I see my friends and family enough
I miss my dad, he lives too far away for me to visit

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**Friday Network**

Friday Network gave their views on the promises made under the Relationships and Family part of Hampshire’s Learning Disability Plan
Adult services

- We wouldn’t know where to go to get advice or help about relationships
- We would like the Health Team to come and talk to us about family and relationships
- I would like to know how to stay safe and healthy in a sexual relationship
- I can talk to my family about problems with friendships
- I’m lonely, I want a relationship
- It’s embarrassing talking about sexual relationships
- I want help and advice about loss and bereavement
- I would like to see my friends more often
- My sister takes me to see family members who live far away
- I get scared of doing new things, so I need help
- Support workers don’t always have enough time
- I don’t really get to try new things
- When I have an assessment sometimes I want my family present, sometimes not
- Having my family with me gives me more confidence
Health

- I see my family when we’re on holiday
- I want to go to Portsmouth to see my friends
- I see friends at Friday Network
- I feel very happy being able to see my friends and family
- Information needs to be easy read and clearer
North East Hampshire Blue LIG November Rep Report

“Relationships and Family”

Who we asked?

Farnborough Self Advocacy Group
Workshop at the Blue LIG

What they said

What makes a good friend?

“making somebody feel welcome”
“making them a cup of tea”

Where do we see our friends?

They said they see most of their friends through Launchpad.
Social groups
At home
What helps to make sure we can see our friends?

“having the right support helps”

“sometimes there isn’t enough time to do the things I have to do like make dinner with support and do the things I want to do like see meeting friends”

“Transport is important so we can get to the groups we meet at”

One man has been having problems with his family. It took a long time for Social services to take him seriously and he needed advocacy to help with this. Once they started listening things happened quickly and he is now moved into his own place and has started a job. He said this would not have happened without his advocate helping him.

Green LIG
Havant Hub
We asked the group to tell us the things they do with their friends?

Ander house club
Pub – with day service or support staff
Evening groups – some people can’t go due to no bus back and can’t afford a taxi.

My house mate and I have different staff so we can do the different things we want.

I have no support hours – so I have to find groups to go to see my friends.

I am gay – find this very hard with my learning disability

I like the friendship group through Launchpad – I can still see my friends.

My boyfriend and I wanted to get married his family would not let it happen.

I see my friends going to day service

Bus drivers – grumpy when they think I am trying to use pass too early.

North Green LIG – Alton and Kingsley groups

I see my friends at day service – That’s why I love coming here

Wednesday disco – I see my friends but we need staff to be able to go.

My keyworker helps my visit and call my sister

When we go out with day service it is nice being known in local community

I can go round my friend’s in house 1 for dinner.

I only see my friends when at Kingsley

My friends who moved on from day service – my mum helps me see them

It hard seeing people – not many buses – don’t know how to use them.
Shine club – at weekend – too expensive can’t go

See my friends at community lunch at day service

Shows – day service support me if I want to go

I would like to see my boyfriend outside of day service.

My carer helps me see my friends

See friends at disco in Petersfield – can be hard to get there

I love the groups that happen at day service

Kingsley is important as I love seeing friends

Promises that could be improved:

- Some people said they wanted more help to talk about their sexuality and support to have/make appropriate relationships.

- Doctors/professionals to ask us more about sharing information with our family. I may not want you to share it with them.

- Passenger transport – some people are still having problems with buses drivers saying they can’t use their passes when they can as it’s a disabled one not an older person.

- More help to meet friends without my parents, and help to get to more groups.

We only see friends at organised activates like day service, advocacy groups, or other monthly planned events (run by other small disability groups) if these would stop I would not see my friends.
Relationships are very important

I hardly see my boyfriend, I want to see him more.

I ask the staff but they say we got other things going on.

I go out more now and I can have friends to sleep over.

Staff said I can’t have a boyfriend in case things go wrong.

I can’t go to Wednesday club because we don’t have a house car.

Residents who have mobility cars, cannot use them as dimensions are employing non drivers.

3 members could not come to the group as they have no staff to support them. 2 are wheelchair users

I had a nice girlfriend but the staff were nasty to me. I could only meet her with staff who supervised me. –I have worked for 21 years and get paid.

11 people said my family are very important to me

My sister is my financial administrator and it now works well for me.

My mum is very important to me.
**Where and How do I talk to my Friends?**

At home with our family/carers and those we live with

At College – but it is hard to see our friends when we finish college

At Day Service in Fareham and Gosport and other providers such as Enhanced Lives “I met people I used to go to Highbury College with in 2012. It’s good that I can see them again”

Solent Day Care and Solent Youth Action ‘I see my friends from college’

At work – volunteering in charity shops, at Right to Work at Staunton, in some local cafes
A lot of us use Facebook “We know what’s going on” – to share news and stay in touch with our friends

Speak on phones (not much) and Text (more with carers than friends)

Use Skype to talk to family abroad

1 person plays football once a week

People rely on family/carers to go the gym or swimming and have never gone with their friends

Members of youth groups such as the SAY Group, Kids, Lee on Solent youth club, Gen Club, Genesis, Music for Fun, Friday night in Rowner (Bivol trust), and

Other groups such as The Daring Club (fortnightly) Art and Drama at the Ashcroft Centre, Art in Emsworth on Fridays, Daring Disco, FADSAD and GADSAD

‘I joined Stars but they didn’t find me a girlfriend. Now I’ve signed up for Flame Introductions in Surrey’ ‘Stars is expensive’

Trips to Chessington, the cinema, London with organised groups such as KIDS, Mencap

On special occasions – usually a birthday party, BBQ or Christmas party

WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE OUR FRIENDS

‘We don’t meet our friends independently of clubs and organised events’

‘I only see my girlfriend at work.’ ‘We have never gone on a date – I have asked my carers to speak to her carers....’
Relationships and families report from the Purple LIG (Winchester)

We talked to Hear Us and Funky Lunch

Unfortunately we couldn’t send a photo from the phone we took one on but this is a picture from afternoon tea, some of these people are part of one or both of the groups we spoke to.

- Since some people have changed support (new providers) some of us have found it more difficult to do things together and we have not always been able to do things together like we used to with our friends

We have problems getting support at the same time if we both need it and cannot share support.

It is more difficult and expensive for us to go out at night and to groups because we can’t share taxis. We can’t use the same account and we don’t always get the support to book together and share the cost.

Some of us used to see more of each other when we had our old support and we miss this.

We need support workers to work together

- We want more support with our personal relationships

We would like more relationships courses and advice

We know how we feel but sometimes we do not know how to cope with these feelings. Support could help us make good choices.

Partners don’t always have the same support provider, it is important they work together to support our relationship and our choices.
Some people have had bad experiences and felt unsupported because people have not worked together for them.

We don’t always want our parents involved. Some things are private!

- Keeping in touch with family and friends when things change, after a move or when they become ill is important

We are not always supported to keep in touch with people when they move on from groups, college or move area. Not everyone uses mobile phones or face book.

**Family is important.** This includes our relationship with grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. It is important we have support to keep addresses, phone numbers and contact even when they become elderly or live a long way away.

Families can be complicated sometimes just seeing both parents can be hard. We need help with family problems sometimes too.

When family members become ill we need support to understand what is wrong and how they are being looked after.

- Our relationships with people paid to be in our lives

Where there are lots of professionals in our life it needs to be clear who everyone is and what they do? There are lots of job titles and some people just have letters, they are not easy to understand?

It is important to know the people helping you especially with personal things.

Support workers we haven’t met before turning up and having to see different doctors can be difficult and uncomfortable.

When people are moving on or leaving their job we like to know and be able to say goodbye.

*Can we have some information on what is happening because of our feedback that we have given this year? (Hear Us)*
Orange LIG

Henry Sims met with members of Gateway Club in Andover, and service users at Andover Day Services to discuss Relationships and Family

The 3 main issues were:

Places to meet are important

People meet up with friends at Club Seven and Gateway, as well at day services and work.

‘Meeting up at Day Services is easy because we have a building base and can go over and have a chat when we feel like it- it does not have to be organised with support workers’

‘We need places to meet up with our friends’

‘Where I live (Lion Oak Court) is good for making friends’ (there is a group lounge area)
BUT - Break ups and arguments can be difficult to deal with though and it is easy to get dragged into arguments - it is not easy to avoid someone you have had an argument with if they go to the same service as you. We need more varied opportunities for evening social activities, something as well as Gateway.

**Transport and support**

Meeting up with friends is important to everyone, but a lot of people can only meet up with their friends if they have support - so cannot be spontaneous - everything needs to be planned in advance, and needs to be when staff are available.

Transport to meet up with friends can be an issue

‘We need to use taxis in the evenings, which can be too expensive’, or people have to rely on family members.

**Keeping it positive**

Sometimes we need a break from our families - so respite is important.

‘Respite is important to keep things going well between me and my family’

‘Going to Shared Lives is like having a second family - someone else for me to talk to about things that are worrying me’
TOP 3 POINTS

FRIENDSHIPS ARE STILL VALUED AS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS IN PEOPLE’S LIVES

PEOPLE KNOW WHERE THEY CAN GO IF THEY NEED SUPPORT AND ADVICE ON RELATIONSHIPS

EVEN THOUGH MANY PEOPLE LIVED INDEPENDENTLY, PARENTS WERE STILL A VERY IMPORTANT SUPPORT NETWORK FOR INDIVIDUALS

Speaking Space Orange LIG

I think it’s important to have a good relationship with my parents and my brother. I like to see my brother as I don't see him all the time.

It’s Important to see friends and to have a good working relationship with staff.

Being able to communicate with people is a good for a relationship.

It's important in any relationship I have that I feel listened to.
I’m not good in relationships. I struggle to get on with people and I struggle to understand people's facial expressions. I got bullied at school and I didn’t get diagnosed until I was in my late teens so everyone just thought I was weird.

I like people that are not too quiet

I get on better with boys more than girls as girls can be bitchy

I have good relationships with my brother

I find it difficult to look at people when they ask me to

I'm not used to the feeling of getting to close to someone I don't know what to do with those feelings so I end up pushing people away.

Can't be bothered to get a girlfriend I can't afford them!

I've got loads of friends

Got on better with older people as people my age want me to do things they do like going clubbing and I can’t handle that.

Eastleigh Self Advocacy Orange LIG

My fiancé and I need support to be able to see each other. We go out to the Chill Out Club together. We want to get a house or a flat together when we get married. Our families and our keyworker will help us.
When I’m at my boyfriend’s house we can’t get any privacy as his house mates are always in the way.

Need clear information to find things out.

I don't like to talk about relationships and stuff.

It means a lot to come to the friendship group to make new friends and keep the ones I've got.

I like the friendship group to see my friends I feel safe here.

I liked the Police event in Netley because it helped me build more relationships with the police. I'd like the police and fire service to come to the self-advocacy group.
My boyfriend’s parents are around and they help us.

Important for me to have my mum around she helps me.

I get a private taxi it's good to use the same firm as they get used to you. Travelling with the same taxi driver helps me build up a good relationship with them.

I think it's Important to have close relationship with your family.

I lived away from my mum for a bit but I missed her. I'm happy to be back home again because I can help look after her when I help her at night.

I've been with boyfriend for 20 years I like going out and having fun. He looks after me he's a good boyfriend. I know I can go to the doctors if I need information about sex. I find my doctor easy to talk to. I can't read that well so I think information on these things should be in easy read.

I'd like to see more relationship courses for people with learning disabilities.

Important to come here to have my friends
Family so very important

Mum’s Important to me

It's important to have a good relationship with your support worker as it affects your day.

Romsey and Waterside Day Service and Romsey Self Advocacy Group

I would like a girlfriend. I need help and information about how to get a girlfriend.

I’ve been married for 15 years. It works well with my husband. He's helps me with the things I need physical help with and I help him emotionally.

Family relationships are also important, my dad is important to me he's always been in my life. It's good to have a strong support network.
More information on keeping safe in relationships. Reading stuff is good but it's good to talk.

I'd go to my doctor if I needed to talk to someone

Eastleigh Borough Mencap - ACTIVE CITIZENS LD PLAN

Family & Relationship section

Feedback after listening to comments & promises in LD Plan on this subject:

Transport – what transport?

How can you have an adult social life or progress a friendship or relationship if you can’t see the other person because you live in different areas. The public transport cuts have severely restricted peoples’ mobility. There are few buses in the evening and none at night. (??)

We need support workers who can drive, to take you out to places when public transport is not available or are willing to take you on public transport to events that you want to attend.

Where is the information about what is on and who is offering what?

Previously we did have specially trained people to provide this information – people who knew each person in the day service and in the community. They had a thumbnail sketch of the person and looked for activities to suit them – these were Brokers – Rosie Sutcliffe and Sharon Johnston, they worked at BDS but also initiated lots of new projects and courses in the community and supported people to attend them.
EBR MENCAP’s most long term project – the Chill Out Club (evening social club in a pub started in 2007) was started after conversations with Rosie and Sharon about what people were asking for.

People want a service that is personal to them, not to look through a website and have to try to find it– lots of people can’t go online.

In Eastleigh it would be great to have an office where you could go in and speak to someone and tell them about yourself and what you wanted to do and find out what was on offer. That is a personal service.

At the moment we rely on word of mouth. EBR MENCAP gets info and passes it on if they hear about events and so do other providers.

Care Managers do not know what goes on in the community – that is not their job. They call providers if they have someone who has no activities, needs social interaction and ask what we offer or know about.

Some support workers do research to find out about activities, others do not and are unaware of the opportunities available. Whose job is it?

Some people need a support worker to help them socialise – drive you to an activity, get to know you, act like a kind of buddy, being friendly, explaining things through pictures etc Also helping that person to have fun at events.

MORE relationship courses? How about one?! (Comment by a young adult)

Some people who used to attend BDS remembered being given a relationship course by one Day Service Officer. The course was useful for the people who attended, people liked to discuss things and learn. They talked about relationships, partners etc

Some people said they have not been offered any courses on relationships or sexuality by anyone.

Young adults said - Sexuality - This is very personal stuff – some people would not have liked to talk about this in a group situation. It might make them feel very vulnerable.

Sometimes people are so busy in their lives they do not have opportunities to meet new people and make friends.

It is hard to find a partner. Stars in the Sky did not seem to serve that purpose.

There is an LD Dating website but many people not comfortable with this.

It is hard for some people who do not outwardly show any signs of having a LD. They can meet someone and feel very vulnerable if that person does not accept their LD. It is a real confidence issue.

If people have partners they need and want to see each other and spend time together – resources do not allow this. Partners may live apart, have different
schedules and support – may not have the transport links or money to be able to meet up.

People might want to make their own arrangements, not necessarily just accept that they can only see each other when the support routine dictates/allows. Possibly inviting the other person home, etc.

Sometimes support can help with arranging things. Some support workers are not well trained to assist people to do stuff or to further friendships. Shared support can allow friendships to succeed but it is not encouraged by all providers.

Some people reported that they could not talk to their support.

One person said they have 4 carers, a good range of people who understand them and interact with them in different ways and who they do different things with. Other people did not have this arrangement.

Health –

One person said his family were not at all involved when he had health issues.

No one could remember seeing easy read health information, talks advertised etc

Transport -

Lots of negative comments about lack of transport

Next stop announcements on buses being shut off, so people did not know where they are on the route.

Good new signage and audible information service at Eastleigh Bus station.

What has happened to Passenger Transport Forum?

People would like to say how dissatisfied they are with the cuts and changes to bus services but have no central place to express this.

**Spiral Blue Yellow LIG**

Friends are really important to me. I like living with people who are my friends and who I know. I have a partner.

Everyone who was asked at Spiral Blue agreed that;

…”my family are one of the most important things in my life.”

…”I’d like to make more friends if possible”

Most people wanted more friendships through groups.
Stable Yellow LIG

Tanya asked people at the Stables and at her Pool night and concluded that most people had very good experiences with their relationships including; personal relationships, families and with staff.

People told Tanya that they knew where to get help if they needed it.

A few people agreed that more easy read information about relationships would be good.