



15 July 2016

Agenda Item:4

Children's Trust Executive Sponsor: Dr Kate Allen

'A STOP SMOKING IN SCHOOLS' (ASSIST) SMOKING PREVENTION PROGRAMME

Purpose of the Report

1. To update and share the progress and initial activity of the ASSIST programme commissioned by Public Health Nottinghamshire via the Nottinghamshire Children's Integrated Commissioning Hub (ICH) and the Schools Health Hub (SHH) and provided by Nottinghamshire County Council Youth Service.

Information and Advice

2. ASSIST is a three year programme commencing 2015/16 with a contract value of £450,000

Background

3. Around 10 million adults smoke in the UK, treating smoking related illnesses costs the National Health Service around £2.7 billion every year and causes nearly 20% of deaths in England. Children who start smoking before the age of 16 are twice as likely to continue as adults compared to those who take up the habit later.
4. In Nottinghamshire around 17.5% of adults smoke (an estimated 111,496 people). This figure masks local variation where in some parts of the county this can range from 10.2% to 22.6%. In Nottinghamshire an estimated 2,500 children take up smoking each year and approximately 5.3% of children age 15 are regular smokers, this is in line with the regional figure (5.3%) and slightly less than the England figure (5.5%).
5. ASSIST is a targeted smoking prevention programme delivered to schools in Nottinghamshire and aims to reduce adolescent smoking prevalence. ASSIST encourages new norms of smoking behaviour by training influential Year 8 students to work as 'peer supporters' who are supported to have informal conversations with other Year 8 students about the risks of smoking and the benefits of being smoke-free.
6. Internationally and in the UK no other schools-based smoking prevention programme has been found to be as effective in such a rigorously conducted large scale randomised trial. The costs and benefits of the intervention fall

within the range of previously reported school-based interventions to prevent the uptake of smoking.

7. The ASSIST Programme has been evaluated by a randomised controlled trial funded by the Medical Research Council. The trial found the programme to be effective in reducing smoking prevalence over a two year period of follow-up, with the trial results published in The Lancet. If implemented throughout the UK, it is estimated that it would prevent 20,000 young people taking up smoking each year.
8. DECIPHer IMPACT (the organisation with overall responsibility for the programme) provides the necessary ASSIST training, support, advice, resources and quality assurance to set up and deliver effectively. It also provides ongoing events and updates to the programme.

Programme Update

9. The ASSIST Programme Coordinator and an initial cohort of ASSIST coaches/trainers have been appointed with more to follow as demand dictates.
10. DECIPHer IMPACT ASSIST training has been delivered to eleven members of staff to date. The recruitment and training will be on-going over the summer term break to keep pace with development and refresher updates will also be available to staff to share knowledge and experience.
11. So far 20 schools have been contacted with information about the ASSIST programme via different methods and using varying levels of contact depending on rank in the target list. Currently the programme is being run in four schools (see table below) and in each of these schools have exceeded the target of 15% of the year group being trained up as peer supporters. The project will be completed with all of these schools by the end of this academic year and they are keen to do the project again next year. Four more schools are lined up to start the programme from September (see table below). The strict timeline of the project was the reason for it not being delivered to these schools this academic year due to the amount of time left before the summer holidays. Three of the top five targeted schools are engaged in the project.
12. The coordinator has a close relationship with DECIPHer IMPACT for guidance and support and is working collaboratively with partners and associates including local Councillors. The coordinator has also built up a strong network with colleagues delivering the ASSIST programme in other areas such as Luton and Hertfordshire to share best practice and help make improvements to the process.
13. An ASSIST Programme project management system is in place to see progress and outcomes against costs at a glance.
14. Once schools are committed to the programme there have been no issues taking students out of school for the two days of training and ASSIST trainers, teaching staff and students work well together. This may be because it is a 'win-win' situation all round with a democratic selection process of students which boosts confidence self-esteem and self-efficacy. There is little additional input required from teaching staff and it is looked on favourably by OFSTED.

15. **Table 1** below details the activity during 2015/16

No	Name of School	Rank	Started	Progress
1	Sutton Academy	2	15.03.16	Final follow up session planned for 30.06.16
2	Brunts Academy	7	10.04.16	At follow up session 3
3	Holgate Academy	15	25.04.16	At follow up session 2
4	Kirkby College	11	06.05.16	At follow up session 2
5	Ashfield School	5		Starting in new academic year
6	Outwood Academy Portland	4		Starting in new academic year
7	Outwood Academy Valley	13		Starting in new academic year
8	Dukeries Academy	16		Expressed an interest in starting in new academic year

16. Here are examples of compliments and experiences of students:

- 'I learned that I can influence people's ideas by using my knowledge'
- 'I have different views and that's OK'
- 'I now know that I never want to smoke'
- 'Smoking is bad for you'
- 'The only thing I would change about the course is to have more people doing it'
- 'I learned that I am an introvert but I am still quite persuasive'
- 'I made lots of friends'
- 'My main achievement was finding out so many facts'
- 'It boosted my confidence'
- 'I realise that I can learn a lot in two days'
- 'I learned that I am more confident than I thought'
- 'I stood up and talked in front of people'
- 'I am more influential in my peers' eyes than I thought'

Very positive feedback which shows that the students are not only gaining information and facts about smoking but gaining confidence and transferable life skills too.

17. Here are examples of comments made by teachers:

- 'There has been very little work involved for us'
- 'A great selection of students, not who I would've necessarily expected. Very interesting'
- 'A real confidence builder'
- 'I will take lots of things away from this training and use them myself, particularly the personal shield exercise'

- 'It's great to spend time with students that I wouldn't normally have much interaction with'
- 'I've seen a different side to some pupils and some have surprised me'

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) The Children's Trust Executive notes the initial development and progress of the ASSIST programme and agrees to promote and support it.

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Background Papers (and information)

1. Report to the Public Health Committee 12 May 2015, Report of the Director of Public Health: Developing a Schools Health Hub
2. DECIPHer IMPACT ASSIST (<http://www.decipher-impact.com/about-us/>)

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.