

## **7. DCDP Case Study: Affy Well project: N.E. Under 12 Network**

The North East Under 12 Network was established in 2012 with the aim of sharing information about the needs of families in the North East ward of Dundee, and to plan co-ordinated activities for them. Communities include Whitfield, Fintry and Mill O' Mains, all of which have significant numbers of deprived households. This deprivation impacts on families and young people in the community and the trends of poor health, poor resilience, unemployment and low aspiration blights each part of the ward.

The network members identified that priorities were the free provision of food during holiday periods and at tea-time, when many families struggle for sufficient money to cover a nutritional meal and provide stimulating activity for their children.

Over the operational period of 15 months, 12 multi-agency collaborative fun and food sessions have been organised through the Under 12 network. These holiday sessions provide a wide range of arts and crafts, and physical activities over a four-hour period, with a nutritious lunch provided by volunteers.

Through a partnership between local primary schools and community learning and development (CLD) staff, five programmes have been organised to target families who struggle to provide nutritional meals on a very limited budget. The close working relationship between families and the CLD/School Family Development staff has allowed the sensitive and challenging topic of poverty and hunger to be tackled through sessions which allow the whole family to participate in fun cooking activities which end with a family meal together. Families have reported: "it's the best group I have ever been to".

Another initiative involves local voluntary and community organisations who have used Rank funding to access Fairshare Food, which redistributes food that supermarkets anticipate will not be sold by the 'sell by date' to voluntary organisations that can make use of this. Ormiston, Inveresk and Salton Residents Association organise weekly children's clubs where Fairshare food is used by the children to prepare a snack. Unused food is left for families to collect when they pick their children up from the club.

The following stories from volunteers, demonstrate the value of the free food provision:

"A young boy of nine years of age attended the club premises early this week with a rucksack on his back. I was replacing the extra food we receive from Fairshare (from Tesco) on the tables for parents to help themselves. The young person asked me if he could take any of the items on the table. He proceeded to fill his bag. Later, in the youth group, I noticed his rucksack on his back and put my hand on it; I suggested he put it in the office while he played. I noticed it was empty and asked if he had nipped home with the food items; to which he replied "yes, he had". I suggested he help himself to anymore items that he thought his family would want or need. This young person proceeded to fill his bag up again."

"A local parent asked to speak to me as she dropped her two children off at the youth club. We went to a quiet place and she stated that her money had been sanctioned. We helped by giving her two or three bags of food items from Fairshare (from Tesco) plus information on local support that she could access the next day for electricity and gas. This parent received support for three weeks until her family claim was fixed."

The weekly partnership food programmes and tea-time groups have made a huge difference in helping the participating families prepare meals on a limited budget. The programmes have also shown how nutritious elements like home-made tomato sauce can be made cheaper and healthier than leading brands. The differences made by the holiday programme have been harder to quantify, as this is more of a drop-in service, but families have provided positive feedback and want to see this offered in future.

**Mike Welsh, Communities Officer  
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