

Healthy Living Report



What made our project different?

At the CLASP AGM our members decided that they would like to start a Healthy Living project.

We applied for funding from Healthwatch Wokingham Borough, who kindly agreed to support us.

Our project was different to other Healthy Living projects because:

- Our members were involved in the planning
- Every session was fun and interactive
- The information was adapted to meet our members needs



healthwatch
Wokingham Borough



What did the Healthy Living project include?

Healthy Living was a 10 week project that started on Wednesday 23rd November 2016 and finished on Wednesday 2nd February 2017.

We met for 1 hour on a Wednesday afternoon at the Bradbury Centre.

Members of the Healthy Living group also ran a 2 hour Healthy Living workshop on Tuesday 17th January 2016.

25 self advocates attended the workshop.

CLASP's Project Assistant helped to create a video of our project to capture the best moments.



There were 10 members who joined the Healthy Living project. They attended the weekly sessions and will receive a certificate and an easy-read Healthy Living folder.

An important part of the project was signposting our members to other health and wellbeing services.

Every week we added a slogan to our signpost that was linked to the topic we were learning about. The slogans are shown below in blue.



What did we cover in our 10 week project?

Week 1: Introduction

Healthy Living = Healthy Body + Healthy Mind

We started with a questionnaire to find out:

- What people already knew about healthy living
- What they would like to learn
- What health services they already access

Most people thought that healthy living means taking care of yourself by eating the right foods and exercising.

They would go to their GPs, the Learning Disability Health Team and Dieticians for advice about healthy living.

Our members had the chance to be weighed, if they wanted to monitor their weight through the project.



Week 2: Exercise and Wellbeing

Keep on moving

We talked about the importance of good posture (the way we should sit and stand).

We learnt how to find our pulse and looked at how it changed when we exercised.



The group also tried some seated exercises.

Week 3: Sleep

Sleep is a luxury we can all afford

We started with a sleep questionnaire to get everyone to think about their routine. For example, what time they go to bed and do they wake up in the night.

Then we tried meditation to focus our minds on a calm and happy place.

We also talked about some top tips for a good nights sleep. This included:

- Writing down any thoughts or worries
- Stopping caffeine by 2pm
- Keeping your room cool



Week 4: Mental Health

Feed your mind

We talked about our 'Mind Diet' and how it is just as important to feed our minds, as it is to feed our bodies.

We looked at the Healthy Mind Platter, which includes seven activities for our minds that we should try to do each day.

- Focus Time
- Play Time
- Connecting Time
- Physical Time
- Time In
- Down Time
- Sleep Time

The Healthy Mind Platter



We also tried a mindfulness exercise where we took the time to observe a plant and found that we noticed a lot more when we took the time to look at it properly.

Week 5: Christmas Food and Drink

Have a Merry 'little' Christmas

We learnt that the average person consumes 7000 calories on Christmas Day! This shocked all of our members.

To work out how we consumed all of those calories we played a game where you had to match up the number of calories to each of the Christmas foods and drinks.

We were all shocked at the number of calories in some of our favourite Christmas foods and this got the group thinking about the choices they make over Christmas.

We had a list of top tips for a healthier Christmas. They included:

- Going for a walk
- Avoiding 'grazing' by only taking a small plate of food and sticking to that
- Drinking a glass of water in between fizzy or alcoholic drinks



Week 6: Healthy Weight and Setting Goals

If the plan doesn't work, change the plan but never the goal

We learnt about setting SMART goals.

Specific

Measurable

Accountable

Realistic



Time

Our members set themselves realistic goals, like:

- Having a drink with lunch every day
- Not having any junk food before lunch
- Eating two portions of fruit and vegetables every day

We also talked about Annual Health Checks. In 2013-2014 44.2% of eligible adults with a learning disability had a GP health check (www.nhs.uk).

We found that 87.5% of our members had an Annual Health Check but that there were some differences, like how long the appointment was and whether they saw a doctor or a nurse.

We also found that their results were not being recorded in the Health Action Plan folders.



Week 7: Hygiene

Nobody notices when you do but everybody notices when you don't

We talked about the importance of brushing our teeth and used disclosing tablets to see how much plaque we had in our mouths.

We split into groups to look at different tasks like washing your hair, cleaning your bathroom etc. and talked about how often we needed to do each of these.

The group had lots of different views about how often we should do each of the tasks but agreed that first impressions are very important.



Week 8: Exercise

You only regret the workouts you don't do

We looked at the accessible exercise that is available in Wokingham and signposted our members to the Wokingham Active for people with Additional Needs (WAAN) Team.

WAAN run lots of different activities and our members have been enjoying new types of exercise like Zumba and using an accessible gym.

We talked about the importance of stretching and had a go at lots of different stretches that are easy to do at home.



Week 9: Food Labeling

Healthy Eating: Break the habit and make a choice

We learnt about the traffic light food labeling system and looked at lots of different foods to see how healthy they were.

We also looked at the Government's updated Eatwell Guide, which shows how much of each food group we should consume each day.

Members were surprised to see that sugar is outside of the plate and should only be eaten as a treat.

We also did a fruit tasting exercise, where members had to guess what the fruits were and rate them.

Lots of our members often buy meal deals for their lunch and we looked at the choices available.

We found that it can be cheaper to buy a sandwich with a bottle of water and an apple, rather than using the meal deal and adding a sugary drink and cake.



Week 10: Evaluation

Healthy Living is for life – not just for 10 weeks

This was our final week so we looked back at everything we had learnt over the 10 week project.

Nick from Healthwatch came along to meet our members and listen to their experiences from the project.

We completed a evaluation questionnaire and here is some of the feedback we received:

“Just want to say that I really enjoyed the project and the positivity of it”

“I thoroughly enjoyed it, easy information to take in”

“I liked week 5 (Christmas food and drink) the most – I didn’t know Christmas lunch had so many calories!”



What changes have our members made?

“I have been mindful with my time and sometimes drinking water instead of sugary drinks. I have decided to have less energy drinks”

“I have been thinking more about trying to make better food choices”

“I’ve tried to drink more”



What would our members like to learn more about?

- Mental Health
- Long term health conditions
- Being healthy in relationships



Local Health Services – What did we find?

We found that there are lots of differences with the Annual Health Checks and that not everyone is having them.

The Health Action Plans are not being used to record the Annual Health Checks.

There needs to be more support to set realistic and achievable goals to help people reach targets like losing weight.

There is easy read health information available but it is not always used.



How did we spend the money?

We used the funding from Healthwatch Wokingham Borough for:

- Healthy Living Posters to promote the project
- Equipment like scales, toothbrushes and fruit
- Folders for the members and printing costs
- Project Support Worker's time to plan for and run the weekly group
- Healthy Living Workshop



We would like to thank Healthwatch Wokingham Borough for supporting our Healthy Living Project.

The project has been a great success and has helped our members to make lots of positive changes.

Thank you for choosing to support CLASP.



Wokingham Borough Council's response

The project has provided adults with learning disabilities the opportunity to understand the key components to Healthy living. We hope the learning from the workshop can be shared with other groups to further raise awareness of how a healthy body and healthy mind = healthy living.

WBC Commissioner