

# First Aid Project



**August 2019**

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*“My Father had a stroke in 2013 which affected my family greatly. If I learnt first aid at a younger age, maybe I would have recognised the signs quicker and been a bit more confident in dealing with it”*

Safa, Young Healthwatch Volunteer



*“I was one of the two Young Healthwatch members that were chosen to speak to BBC Look East. This is because I had been in a position where it would have been beneficial to understand basic first aid. My mum experienced a suspected heart attack last month, and it was a very scary experience. Although there are minimal procedures which I would have been able to do for her, I still think properly understanding what to do, would have been helpful. Just for reassurance alone, with what was happening.”*

Daisy, Young Healthwatch Volunteer





# Introduction

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire is the local consumer champion promoting choice and influencing the provision of high quality health, social care and wellbeing services for all across central Bedfordshire.

Our sole purpose is to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak out on their behalf.

Young Healthwatch are passionate about emotional health, wellbeing and resilience and meet regularly in Central Bedfordshire to develop ideas and projects that can benefit young people of all ages, drawing on their own personal experiences or recent activities. They focus specifically on health and social care services and the challenges young people may have, now and in the future, when accessing or receiving those services.

Young Healthwatch volunteers were particularly interested in First Aid training, as they are very aware of the impact and benefits this can have for many people, whether it is ensuring young people are safe if an accident were to occur in front of them at school/college or if they were at a party, particularly in those first years of university known as fresher's week.

Two young Healthwatch volunteers had previously been in medical emergency situations with family members over the last year and shared their experiences with the group; how being in this situation made them feel at the time and the type of thoughts and feelings they experienced after the event. This gave them an incentive to learn more about emergency first aid.

This led to further discussion on the type of training available currently and who would benefit. Although some first aid training is provided in schools, the young people felt this was inadequate being too brief and uninformative. Training in schools is delivered en masse to a large group of students during assembly and only includes resuscitation techniques.

Members of young Healthwatch were keen to develop a project to ensure that young people receive basic first aid training to give them confidence in their ability to help prevent further injury or preserving life, which can make a huge difference in critical situations before professional help arrives. They also wanted young people to feel more confident, to improve their resilience, to be educated in key lifesaving skills, while also addressing the importance of being able to protect themselves at a time that may be perceived as a vulnerable stage in their life.

Young Healthwatch secured funding for their first aid project through a Youth Work and Positive Activity Grant from Central Bedfordshire Council. This grant allowed them to work in partnership with St John's Ambulance who provided a training package called 'First Aid Training for Pupils of All Ages'. Using the grant funding, Young Healthwatch were able to plan two training sessions for 40 students at a local venue in Central Bedfordshire.



**First Aid**

**Research**

*“Working alongside the education sector is also central to our work with young people. As part of our campaign to get first aid onto the national curriculum, our strategy for schools is a ground-breaking plan to ensure that all school pupils and staff in England have access to first aid training. Our research shows that almost seven out of 10 pupils wouldn’t know what to do if someone they knew was hurt, yet 72% of these children say they want to learn first aid”<sup>1</sup>*

The above quote from St Johns Ambulance Annual Review 2009 highlights the significance of First Aid training, as it can provide people with the ability to assist others in an emergency, which can enable an individual to potentially come to someone’s aid and save a life. A vast majority of important health organisations and First Aid groups have campaigned for First Aid to become an integral part of the Educational Curriculum. The reason for this was because of the many positive effects it can have on young lives, practically and mentally.

As well as assisting the needs of others it can be used in the protection of your own life by ensuring the right methods of administering medical assistance have been carried out.

In 2015, there was a discussion in parliament for the introduction of the Compulsory Emergency First Aid Education (State-Funded Secondary Schools) Bill. It would have required every state-funded school to teach First Aid to children aged 11-16 years. However, the bill was blocked from progressing any further.

There are several advantages for implementing a policy that enables First Aid to be compulsory for adolescents to learn at school. It has been estimated that around 400,000 young people are injured each school year. These figures would perhaps decline rapidly if more young people were taught the basic skills that are required for first aid training.



<sup>1</sup> St Johns Ambulance Annual Review 2009 - <https://www.sja.org.uk/sja/pdf/Annual%20review%202009.pdf>



## What We Did

# What we did

## Youth Work and Positive Activity Grant

The Youth Work and Positive Activity Grant was introduced and set up by Central Bedfordshire Council's Youth Support Service to provide grants to encourage and enable young people's participation in positive activities and personal development opportunities across Central Bedfordshire.

The purpose was to enable young people to voluntarily take part in, or initiate, planned and purposeful activities that clearly benefit their health, learning or social and personal development.

Young Healthwatch group members agreed to apply for the grant funding as their project met all the requirements specified in the criteria and they also felt that the additional funding would enable them to successfully deliver on the project.

The Council awarded just 12 grants between October 2018 and February 2019 and Young Healthwatch were very excited to be awarded grant funding for their First Aid Training project to benefit young people in the community.

Young Healthwatch received the grant in March 2019 which allowed them to begin planning the event, making decisions on venue hire and promotional activity, and how they wanted the event formatted and prepared on the day.

## Planning

Young Healthwatch chose to use St Johns Ambulance service to provide the training as they are a trusted organisation that specialises in First Aid and are very well known amongst the general public, including having a high profile for charity work and within the volunteering sector. They offer several packages for First Aid training and Young Healthwatch chose the three-hour session called 'Essential First Aid Training and Safety Awareness for Young People'.

This course covered a three hour period with topics including:

- CPR
- Choking
- Severe bleeding
- The recovery position
- Shock
- Chest pains
- Communication and casualty care
- Primary survey
- Resuscitation
- Unresponsive casualty

Young Healthwatch group members felt these were essential first aid skills they wanted to know more about, and also felt that these were important for others to have the opportunity to learn more about too.

Each course holds a maximum of 20 students so Young Healthwatch anticipated they would be able to offer places to 40 young people living in Central Bedfordshire between the ages of 14 and 18 years old (Year 11, sixth form and children in further education) over two sessions.





Young Healthwatch also felt the event would be particularly beneficial for young carers, children with mental ill health and physical or learning disabilities, and they were all encouraged to attend. In addition to learning valuable skills this was also an opportunity for young people from all backgrounds to socialise and network with other young people in a similar environment.

Tickets were available through Eventbrite (free of charge) which allowed easy tracking of contact information and numbers attending each session, along with providing required information on the young people attending in accordance with Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire's Safeguarding Policy. This service was free and easy to use and ensured all the required information was collected in an organised way and also gave the group ideas on how they can organise future projects even better.

The events were widely advertised across Central Bedfordshire, in schools and colleges, and to the many voluntary organisations who support children and young people, such as Carers in Beds, Chums, CAMHS, The Forum and POPYRUS. Social media, including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter was used to advertise the two sessions, including displaying posters in the local community such as libraries and supermarkets. Emails were also sent out via the school's network which helped to ensure parents were aware of the event within their area. The aim was to ensure that a wide variety of young people were encouraged to attend and that the event was promoted outside of educational settings. This proved very successful and the event was fully booked (with a waiting list), with more than a week to go.

Group members all had an input as to what additional services and equipment they thought would be needed on the day, and these decisions varied from items to include in the

'goody bags' given out on the day, to what media channels to contact, and also the very important decision of what to provide for lunch. Young Healthwatch approached local businesses to see if they would contribute and support the community event and had some success. The Cooperative shop provided water bottles for the goody bags and Domino's Pizza shop provided an outstanding array of pizzas and wedges for lunch.

BBC Three Counties Radio contacted Young Healthwatch a week before the event to ask if a group member would be willing to be interviewed on the morning of the event and Amy (Team Leader) and Emily (Young Volunteer)



happily agreed to promote the event on the day. BBC Look East also contacted the office in the preceding week as they were very interested in covering an event organised by young people for young people which addressed current issues, which were clearly important to young people within the community.

All the young people involved were very excited to be given the opportunity to promote the event on local TV news and the planning group ensured all consent forms were signed and returned, to allow the BBC to film young people at the event.



**Impact and  
Outcomes**

# Impact and Outcomes



This project benefited many young people, educating them in particular life skills and giving them confidence in their ability to help prevent further injury or preserving life, which can make a huge difference in critical situations, before professional help arrives.

Being involved in this project, in addition to safety awareness training and education, also helped young people to:

- Make new friends, socialise and build relationships with other young people on the course;
- Increase their resilience;
- Improve their education;
- Learn new skills and positive behaviours to be work ready;
- Feel happier and safer;
- Prevent anti-social behaviour
- Learn additional skills for young carers

Young people's emotional health, wellbeing and resilience is a topic of national and local discussion. Members of Young Healthwatch therefore feel this project was very much needed in their local area, and was of particular benefit for young people's emotional health, providing a sense of achievement, self-confidence and a feeling of safety.

Encouraging confidence in a young person to deal with a medical emergency is a great achievement and will also help them to be 'work ready' as they can choose to disclose their training on workplace applications, Curriculum Vitae's or in educational settings, to demonstrate their skill set and achievements.

Topics such as chest pains, choking, communication and casualty care, primary survey and severe bleeding, covered during the course, are situations that may arise during a young person's lifetime.



By giving them the confidence of knowing what to do in such situations could help save a life of a stranger or someone close to them. Resuscitation was also taught which provided young people with a lifetime of knowledge and skill, should they ever need it.

This training and education was also reassuring for parents who may be concerned for their children who are beginning to venture off to new experiences and adventures with their friends and colleagues. Knowing that their children have the knowledge and skills to deal with a possible medical emergency will be a comfort.





*“Anticipating the day for months in advance, we were all very excited when the day had finally arrived. With everything ready to go, participants gradually filled up the hall. In the morning session, there were two YHW volunteers on the registration desk with the rest of us welcoming everyone into the hall. Plenty of drinks and treats were available for everyone as they entered the event. Once everyone had arrived, our first aid trainer from St Johns Ambulance began the session as the camera crew from the BBC arrived. Throughout the morning, this team directed and filmed us as we learnt more about first aid.*

*The morning session went amazingly, everyone was eager to take part and learn. Despite two participants dropping out prior to the day, attendance was still good. Whilst the majority of YHW members participated in the morning session, two of the team were responsible for the social media. It was Safa’s and Emily’s role to ensure our platforms were updated with pictures, posts and videos to maximise the publicity of the event.*

*After the morning session, all non-volunteers went home, and pizzas were delivered for the YHW team! As we enjoyed lunch, the BBC crew asked individuals for interviews about their personal experiences with First Aid. Professional photos were also taken of YHW during this time for new promos and posters.*

*As the afternoon session approached, new participants began to arrive. All YHW, who had done the morning training, swapped roles with Safa and Emily to complete social media, feedback analysis and some admin. Despite some obstacles from some of the afternoon participants, the afternoon still proceeded. Attendance was, again, good and all places were filled.*

*At the end of each session, all participants were asked to collect two feedback forms: one for YHW and the other for St Johns Ambulance. This allowed us to analyse the day from the public’s perspective. All participants were also given a gift bag each, consisting of first aid equipment, treats and stationary.*

*Overall, the day was very successful; all YHW members were very proud of what we had accomplished. The BBC crew were a highlight as it was shown on Look East that evening! The team will be doing similar events in the future as it went so well!”*

Ellie, Young Healthwatch Volunteer



*“The day was a huge success, it ran very smoothly, and everybody turned up who was meant to. It was great having the media coverage from BBC there along with Healthwatch England for photo opportunities, this made it all very exciting and a great thing for all attendees to be involved in. The training package was pitched at the right level for the age groups and delivered in a great manner that engaged the youngsters well.*

*There was lots of laughs and smiles, which proved it was a great day*

*I hope this has built up some confidence in those that attended and they spread the word about how important this sort of positive activity is.*

*There is a real need and desire for these sorts of opportunities for the Young People of Central Bedfordshire”*

Amy Eymor, Youth Engagement Officer  
Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire



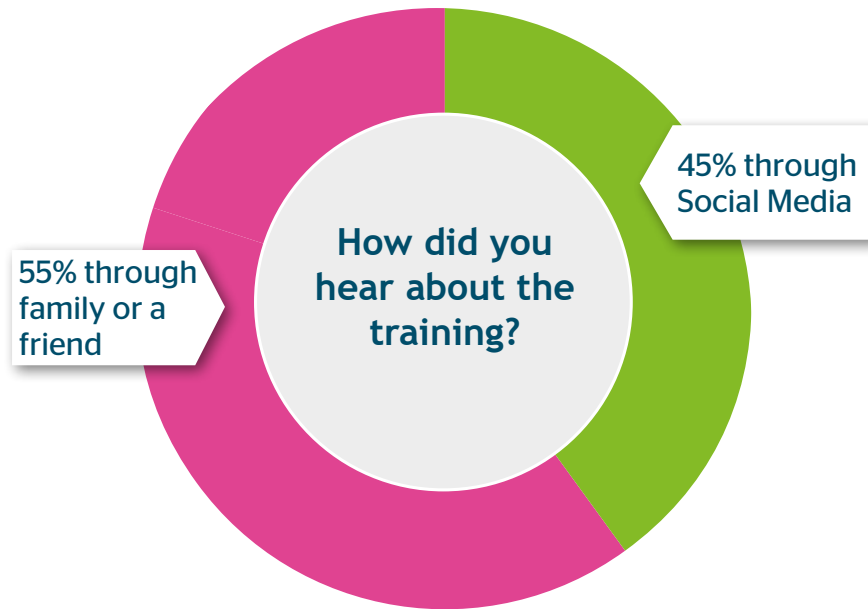


# Evaluation

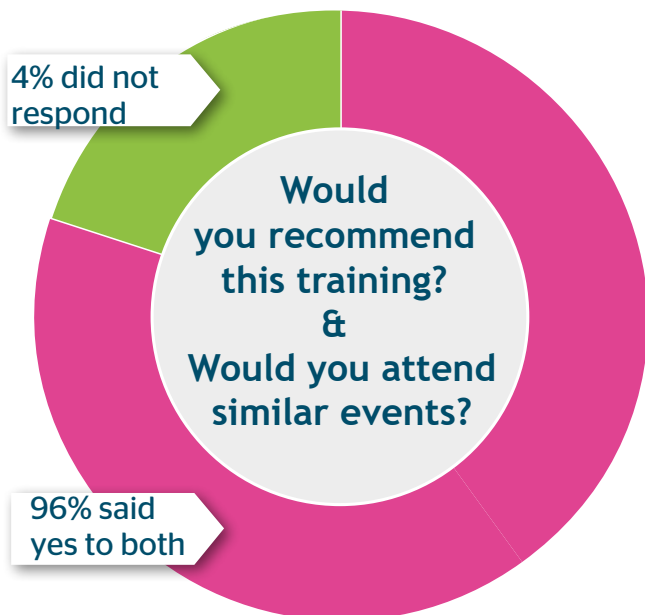
# Evaluation



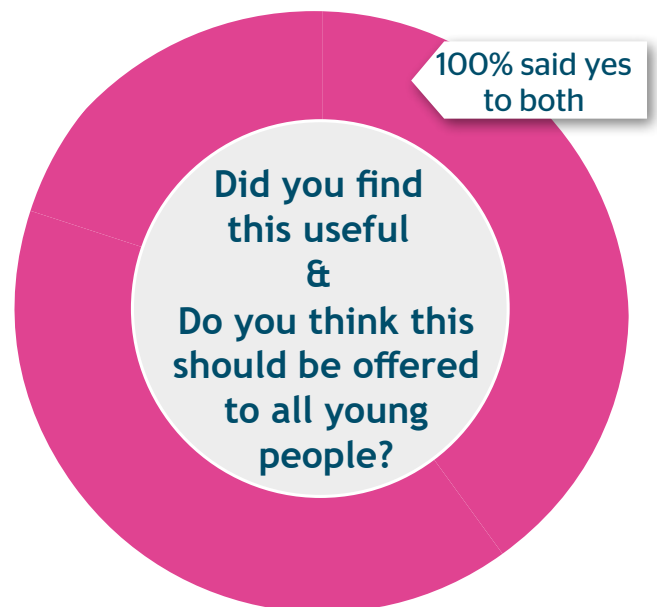
At the close of the event, parents and participants were asked five questions, to determine what they thought about the event and to give Young Healthwatch a better understanding of why they chose to come along.



This informs us how our events are communicated and what to focus on when promoting our events next time.



This is great for Young Healthwatch, so we know that our event was a success



That's an outstanding result. Some even said they wished this training was available in schools and they thought it was essential.

*“I have previously tried to book my daughter on a first aid course, as she’s interested in going into a career in medicine, but they are normally restricted to over 16’s and can be expensive. This was a fantastic chance to have a taster session of basic first aid and she learnt a great deal more than we expected. She found the course useful and is confident she would use some of the skills learnt”*

Parent of a young person attending the event

Parents responded with a positive attitude thanking Young Healthwatch for putting on an event like this, as they believed it was a brilliant idea by the young people. This positive feedback will encourage Young Healthwatch to provide more events for young people living in Central Bedfordshire in the future.

Young Healthwatch members are very keen to expand on this project and retain interest and enthusiasm shown by all the young people who took part. Since the event, Young Healthwatch has had many enquiries asking if we are hosting other events like this with requests for further topics of training for Young People, all of which will assist them in day to day life.

Young Healthwatch will be exploring this further and conducting research to identify what training is available, whilst also aiming to host regular ‘pop-up’ First Aid training events in Central Bedfordshire to help maintain young peoples interest and continue to build their resilience, safety and confidence.

Young Healthwatch will also investigate training opportunities for young people which cover a wider age range as several enquiries were received from young people aged from 11 years old who would like to take part, which is very encouraging.



*“So pleased my daughter went to the first aid event, I am confident now if a minor injury happened, she would be able to deal with it calmly.*

*“My daughter liked being with children who were a similar age to her, trying to learn first aid together, very positive experience.”*

Parent of a young person attending the event





# Recommended

# Actions

# Recommended Actions



The thoughts and suggestions highlighted in the recommended actions below were proposed by the young people who attended the event, in addition to Young Healthwatch Volunteers.

## How should schools be teaching First Aid?

- Although the event was successful in introducing first aid to teenagers, Young Healthwatch believe that the topics covered on the day should be regularly reinforced to ensure young people remember the procedures of First Aid. The only way for this to happen is for schools to make First Aid mandatory, as not everyone will give up time in the holidays to attend events such as this. First Aid is a skill that many people believe they would never have to use so this can limit the attention given to acquiring the knowledge of, for example, treating burns, especially in teenagers. Therefore, first aid should be taught in schools in a way that appeals to their imagination, such as interactive CGI.
- It should be made mandatory that the App from St Johns Ambulance is downloaded by all students, as this is a free service and can be completed in a 20-minute assembly or PSHE lesson. The majority of students have access to mobile phones and having this App on their phone could support them if they ever find themselves in an emergency medical situation.

## First Aid to be incorporated and made a mandatory part of the driving test in the UK

- Following research conducted by Young Healthwatch volunteers, they learnt that in Germany, Austria, Hungary and Switzerland all candidates take part in Basic First Aid learning which is part of the 'learning to drive' process. In particular, Switzerland requires 10 hours certified training before they can apply for a Theory Test.
- The Young People who attended the First Aid event felt this was a good idea and the DVLA in the UK should consider incorporating first aid training as part of the learning to drive process as it would give young people more confidence should they come across or be involved in any type of accident. It would also provide extra reassurance for parents who have children learning to drive and venturing out alone. This training could also include education about the dangers of driving whilst under the influence, using mobile phones at the wheel and not wearing seatbelts etc.
- However, as a counter argument, a small number of young people raised the point that incorporating First Aid into the criteria for the driving test may completely counteract its purpose. A large part of learning to drive is feeling confident and they felt that being reminded of the possibility of being involved in an accident requiring first aid is likely to make new drivers very anxious. This in turn increases the risk to themselves and surrounding vehicles. The majority of young people learn to drive at age 17 and may still be in full time education, therefore, other young people would strongly recommend that mandatory teaching of First Aid should be available in schools and colleges as it will equip learner drivers with the skills they may need.





## Should the Council provide funding for regular events across the county, to enable Young People to attend and receive a 3-hour First Aid course?

If First Aid is **not** written into the curriculum at schools, this will need to be explored further to establish how young people will be given the opportunity to receive this type of training.

Young Healthwatch ideas include a quarterly roadshow or 'Pop Up' stations, visiting towns across Central Bedfordshire, where up to 40 young people a time are given the opportunity to book on and receive this training. Community rooms and venues may be able to offer preferential rates, and by travelling across

Central Bedfordshire many young people will be given the opportunity to join an event nearer to their home.

Young Healthwatch also felt that this type of training could be looked at as an after-school activity/workshop; for example a roadshow around schools in the area.

Young Healthwatch are keen to support a programme like this to enable opportunities for more young people living in Central Bedfordshire.

### What can Young Healthwatch do now?

Following this event, Young Healthwatch received many enquiries about first aid training for younger generations, age 11 upwards and whether Young Healthwatch could host a similar event for them.

Young Healthwatch will explore this further to determine if this is something that could be provided later in the year.





**Thank You**

# Thank You



Planning for this project and producing a successful event would not have been possible without the commitment and dedication of members of the Young Healthwatch team.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all who took part, including:

- **Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire Volunteers** for creating and managing the event on the day
- **Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire staff and colleagues**, for assisting with the day and supporting the Young People involved.
- **Healthwatch England** for coming along to take some photos of the event
- **BBC** for the radio and TV coverage, what a fantastic opportunity for the Young People to be involved in.
- **Susan Clark (HWCB Volunteer)** for just being the person she is and supporting our Young Volunteers in every way she can.

- **Flitwick Football Centre** for hosting the event at the centre and providing a wonderful facility.
- **St Johns Ambulance** for providing the training sessions throughout the day, especially Ian the trainer
- **The Cooperative shop in Flitwick** for providing bottles of water to give out on the day to the students.
- **Domino's Pizza in Flitwick** for providing a wonderful lunch on the day for the workers and media teams.
- **All local businesses and educational settings** that shared, advertised and supported our event in anyway they did.

It was all very much appreciated, Thank You!!!



# YOUNG healthwatch Central Bedfordshire

Our Young Healthwatch volunteers have been busy working on a number of projects since they came together almost a year ago.

They have also recently received appropriate 'Enter & View' training and are keen to put their learning into practice by visiting health and social care services such as hospital wards, surgeries and care homes. The young people will then be able to report their findings from their unique perspective. If you would like a group of young Healthwatch volunteers to visit your service please contact [Amy.Eymor@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk](mailto:Amy.Eymor@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk).

There is a lot more information on the Young Healthwatch website, <https://younghealthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk>, including the great achievement of one of our volunteers who has secured a fantastic apprenticeship with Cancer Research UK.

If you are under 25, why not consider becoming a member of Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire? Get in touch for more information, email [Amy.Eymor@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk](mailto:Amy.Eymor@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk) or call 0300 303 8554.







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