

DIY Theatre Community Interest Company

Impact Summary

JANUARY – DECEMBER 2016



DIY is an established Learning Disability Theatre Company based in Salford. We have been creating accessible and thought-provoking theatre and creative projects since 1994.

We aim to:

Challenge stereotypes through high quality performance, creative projects and research.

Celebrate diversity and creativity in all areas of our work.

Promote good practice and the achievements of performers with learning disabilities.

We offer:

- original performances which tour schools, colleges and theatres
- drama projects with schools, colleges and youth organisations
- regular creative workshops and courses for adults with learning disabilities
- training for Arts Award advisers, universities and practitioners.

Working with adults with learning disabilities



DIY's main company comprises 12 adults with learning disabilities. The company creates original, high quality performances which tour to young audiences with learning disabilities across the region. During 2016 we created and toured a devised performance called 'Following the Thread'.

Members used the framework of the Five Ways to Well-being (nef) to evaluate how activities during the past year have contributed to members' health and well-being:

Connecting: Members felt that they had connected with, and learnt from, each other. They had also connected with audience members, other artists and young people with learning disabilities.

"In drama I've got more friends and very independent now...And talking to other people"

(Alex – DIY member)

Taking Notice: In order to perform, actors need to be able to focus and be "in the moment". DIY members have learned to interact with, and respond to, audience members with PMLD.

"When we are doing plays when we go on tour, (we) focus on what we are doing, keep our eyes glued to ourselves"

(David – DIY Member)



Keeping Active: Drama involves lots of physical movement and members said that participation in DIY kept their minds active.

"Doing all the drama games they are all interactive and everyone joins in. You don't have to get up and run around. We can stay in our seats - using our memory, it gets you stretching and movement in your body... it's not just physical but mentally using your brain. It keeps you on your toes"

(Robert: DIY Member)

Learning: Group members have been developing new skills in working with PMLD audiences and developing sensory theatre approaches. Members have also developed skills in working with older people with memory loss and using film and social media.

Giving: Members are very aware of the contribution they are making to the groups with which they work. This is reflected in a strong sense of pride and purpose.

"We offer a service to these young people... If we can make a difference to one person's life I think it is worth it and I get a lot of pleasure in knowing that we have worked and made a difference to those lives."

(Robert: DIY member)

Courses for adults with learning disabilities

During 2016 DIY ran six ten-week courses for adults with learning disabilities.

66 people attended these courses

which covered drama skills, performance and an introduction to volunteering.

100% of participants engaged actively in more activities and groups.

100% of participants reported that they had developed new friendships and relationships.

100% of participants reported that they feel less socially and emotionally isolated.

Working with volunteers with learning disabilities

DIY's volunteers are involved in designing, running and evaluating Arts Award projects at Discover, Explore, Bronze and Silver levels with young people with learning disabilities, as well as running regular courses for adults with learning disabilities.

During 2016, **7 adults with learning disabilities received training in volunteering –**

- **6 of these went on to volunteer** on DIY's education and outreach programmes.
- **4 became Discover and Arts Award Advisers.**
- 6 completed DBS processes.
- **7 gave over 1000 hours of volunteering for the benefit of the Community** and received their Salford 100 hour volunteering certificate.



80% of DIY volunteers felt they were making a positive contribution to their community.

100% of DIY volunteers reported improved self-esteem and sense of purpose.

100% of DIY volunteers were more confident to actively contribute to the design, delivery and development of educational / outreach projects.

80% of DIY volunteers became more involved in DIY's Board.

Working with young people with learning disabilities



"The performance was made so personal for each student who came to watch. Because of the one to one attention they were all able to access the music and props. This also meant that the students who have the least opportunity to experience live theatre had the chance to do so. It was wonderful to see our young people experience theatre for the first time"

(Chatsworth High School and Community College, Salford)

'Following the Thread'

During 2016 DIY devised and toured 'Following the Thread' an original sensory performance designed for audiences with PMLD. We toured to 8 venues across the Greater Manchester region.

14 performances of the show reached
audiences of over 250 people.

"It was excellent. Together with the costumes, props, music and actors it brought together all the activities that we had been a part of over the other weeks. One student when he attended the performance he participated fully in the whole performance without the aid of his comforter. His responses were magical to see, reminding us how privileged we are to work with these young people"

(Firwood High School, Bolton)

Arts Award projects

During 2016 DIY has worked with 57 young people with learning disabilities on 6 Arts Award projects, delivered in partnership with schools and voluntary youth organisations.

37 young people with PMLD

extended their experience of sensory theatre and developed their creativity and communication. They all achieved a Discover Arts Award certificate.

12 young people with moderate learning disabilities increased their drama skills, communication and creativity and developed basic leadership skills. **All 12 achieved a Level 1 Bronze Arts Award qualification.**

8 young people with learning disabilities in transition to adulthood increased their art-form knowledge, creativity and developed their planning, review and leadership skills. **They are all working towards their Level 2 Silver Arts Award qualification.**

"Over the weeks staff could see the progress each student was making especially regarding their progress with anticipating the activities and engaging with them. It was good for the students to work with different people and to watch the relationships develop"

(Firwood High School, Bolton)

"DIY has inspired us to develop our own drama sessions; we have made the groups a lot smaller and themed our sessions. It's been really positive for staff to see how other organisations deliver drama/music to our learners"

(Bury College)

"Great range of sensory activities, pitched at the right level, and highly accessible. All students given the opportunity to perform and take part, in a positive and encouraging way. Songs and activities moved at students pace and they were given plenty of time to explore and be creative "

(Chatsworth High School and Community College, Salford)



Working with Arts Award



DIY is a national leader in Arts Award training and support. We deliver Arts Award training and support at all levels and are one of only three organisations nationally delivering specific Discover/ Explore and Bronze/ Silver training to people working in SEN settings.

Arts Award Adviser Training

During 2016 DIY ran 15 Arts Award training sessions and trained 141 people to become Arts Award advisers. Of these 61 were trained at Discover & Explore levels (16 for working in SEN settings), 57 were trained at Bronze and Silver levels (20 for working in SEN settings) and 23 were trained at Gold level.

89% of attendees rated the training as excellent or very good.

"DIY have been selected for this work because of the expertise of their organisation and their nominated trainer. DIY have offered SEN training as part of the Bronze/Silver training package for a number of years and in April 2015 this offer was extended to the Discover and Explore Arts Award training offer. Trinity can confirm that the SEN training offer delivered by DIY have seen good participation in the courses Trinity are committed to ensuring Arts Award training is accessible to a range of young people and we value the expertise provided by DIY."

Trinity London

Arts Award Support

DIY supported 8 cultural / educational organisations with their Arts Award delivery through one-to-one support visits.

DIY has run 2 support surgeries during 2016 which have **offered support to 7 arts award advisers.**



Partnerships

During the year, DIY has collaborated with a range of local, regional and national partners including: Curious Minds, Chatsworth High School and Community College, University of Salford, University of Manchester and You Can Community Club.

"DIY consistently model exemplary practice through the leadership of members as facilitators and advocates for arts and culture in mainstream and SEND settings. They have also been a prime mover in the development and delivery of Arts Award across the region. They have worked with us to support staff in SEND school networks to develop their practice through sharing their own skills and knowledge.... DIY is a valuable resource for the region"

(Jude Bird, Head of Education Partnerships at Curious Minds)



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