

Transforming Lives – Hints And Tips for Cohort Facilitators.

1. You will need to make sure that the session remains within timings where a programme is delivered in schools due to school timetables, room access etc.
2. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to session starting to allow time for all to join the Microsoft Teams Sessions and to support with any IT issues and personal issues young people may have.
3. You will need to agree with your 2nd cohort facilitator who will be sending out invites each week, it is helpful to share your mobile number and email address with young people in case they are not able to join so they can call you. Also have your cohort facilitator mobile number so you can contact each other quickly if required.
4. You will need to allow for a 5 mins for feedback at the end of the session once the subject specialist has left as part of the evaluation. You can share this:- Hints and Tips guidance with the subject specialist to help them develop their session.
5. Invites need to be sent weekly so that it helps to remind young people about the next session. Be aware that it may be sent more than once!
6. It is good to have mobile numbers for young people and their emergency contact details in a table or spreadsheet that both cohort facilitators have a copy of so that contact with referrers, parents/carers can be made if required.
7. If you are on leave for a session, please give other professionals lots of notice so they can plan for your absence. Where possible, try not to take leave in the middle of the programme as young people will build up a relationship with you.
8. You will need to have your camera on for all sessions, so please consider what is in the background (family photos, ways to identify the property) and what you are wearing. Please consider that if you are at home or in your organisation's building you will need a quiet space around you.
9. If you are usually required to wear a uniform, consider if this may be a barrier to young people and how you are able to overcome this?
10. You will need to be approachable, friendly and respectful to the young people. Be prepared to adapt your discussion with young people to encourage their engagement if it is a quiet group or to help re-focus them.
11. Try to encourage the young people to have cameras on where possible and remain on. If this is not possible, another good way is to encourage use of the chat function; this is helpful if the group is quiet and not comfortable in speaking, they are more likely to use this.

12. Try to give the young people 5 mins to settle in at the start before you hand over the subject specialist and introduce them and remind about any ground rules if time.
13. Offer the opportunity to the young people if they need to speak to someone about an issue that is raised in the session that they can do with yourself as a cohort facilitator.
14. You will need to be aware of safeguarding and agree if you are from different organisations which policy you will be following. This needs to include Cause of Concerns to be considered throughout the project along with immediate referrals to social care.
15. Please consider not only standalone disclosures, but your observations of the young person, their clothing, behaviour, discussions around their behaviour outside of the group.
16. In the first session, agree the ground rules and expectations with the young people. Include what to do if they are unhappy or uncomfortable with a discussion and how they can contact someone to access support i.e. camera off, on mute, email or SMS a cohort facilitator or to speak with a school member of staff if present in the room.
17. Be aware of group dynamics. If you have a young person who is very confident and talking a lot – are you able to give them a “task”? Can you ask them to put everyone’s comments in the chat so you can pull others into the conversation? Could you look at activities being completed and dividing the young people into smaller groups? Are you able to discuss this with the subject specialist so that they can ask specific young people? Could you email the subject specialist prior to the group with a short synopsis of the group i.e. if the session about knife crime a young person has previously been found with a weapon, or has a family member who has been victim to knife crime.
18. Remember to have make sessions fun... young people will be nervous at the start and it may take a few weeks for them to start to “gel as a group”. They may also become sad, disappointed at the end of the project so you will need to consider how you will support them such as signposting to other professionals and agencies for ongoing support.

Transforming Lives – Hints and Tips for Subject Specialists.

1. You will need to make sure that the session remains within timings where a programme is delivered in schools due to school timetables, room access etc. If your session is 50mins in length then plan for 40mins so that there is time for discussions / Q and A.
2. Log into the session 10 to 15mins before the start time to make sure everything works and you get to meet and greet the young people and cohort facilitators too.
3. Try not to use jargon where possible and keep things simple.
4. It is ok to use their language where appropriate as it will help the young people understand.
5. Allow time for activities as young people struggle to sit and listen for extended periods of time. Activities could be a question asked to the group to allow for a discussion, videos with Q and As, visual activities on the screen that they are able to become involved in.
6. Boys are more likely to learn better with activities rather than discussion based learning so please try to build this into your plan if possible.
7. At the end of the session you will need to log out of the meeting so the cohort facilitators can speak to the young people about feedback and their learning etc.
8. You can ask for feedback after each session if you wish to help develop your session.
9. If you have resources you need posting out prior to the session please do this with 2 weeks' notice to allow cohort facilitators the time to get these to the young people.
10. It may be that you go with the young people's interests on a particular topic in your session. This is ok and please do not worry if you don't cover everything you planned.
11. You may want to send out information after the session to the young people. Please discuss with your cohort facilitator who will ensure information is sent to young people.
12. You will need to have your camera on for all sessions, so please consider what is in the background (family photos, ways to identify the property) and what you are wearing. Please consider that if you are at home or in your organisation's building you will need a quiet space around you.
13. If you are usually required to wear a uniform consider if this may be a barrier to young people and how are you able to overcome this?
14. Make young people aware that if they need to speak to someone about an issue that is raised in the session that they can do this with a cohort facilitator.

15. Be aware of group dynamics. If you have a young person who is very confident and talks a lot, consider giving them a “task” . Can you ask them to put everyone’s comments in the chat so you can pull others into the conversation? Could you look at activities being completed and dividing the young people into smaller groups? Are you able to discuss this with the subject specialist so that they can ask specific young people?
16. Do not be afraid to say “I don’t know the answer to that” but agree you will find out the answer and tell the cohort facilitator so it can be fed back.
17. Remember to have fun...young people will be nervous at the start just like us.