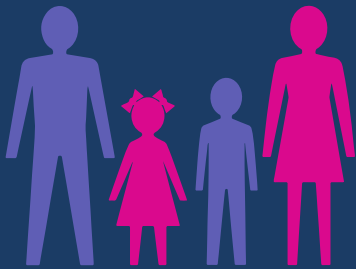


Working in partnership with **Changing Minds Kent CIC** to improve the **mental health and wellbeing** of **families and children** in areas of poverty.

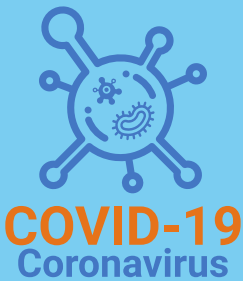


Their **Fit & Fed programme** supported **vulnerable and isolated families** affected by the Covid-19 pandemic to improve their **physical and mental health**.



34%

The project focused on the area of Thanet in Kent, where 34% of the district live in poverty.



Specific schools were identified from areas of disadvantage and poverty, requiring support for both children and families. This included Hartsdown Academy.

The impact of Covid-19 reinforced the need for more help in the community, due to the increased challenges for disadvantaged children and families.

THE PROJECT

"We began to address this need by engaging with Kent Sport to discuss how we can support the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families".



"Thanks to access to Satellite Club funding and support from Kent Sport we were able to deliver a 10-week course targeting vulnerable families experiencing challenges around Covid-19".



"The project required strong relationships with schools, family liaison officers and safeguarding leads to signpost hard to reach children and vulnerable families to the project".

WHAT WAS INVOLVED



We provided free food parcels for families, ensuring they are getting good nutrition during the pandemic.



We supported physical and mental wellbeing through online content, including 'Mentally Fit with Billy' You Tube fitness classes and a wellbeing brochure.



We delivered free tennis equipment to help children be active and included 2 x tennis rackets, balls and a frisbee.



We offered the support of a trainee counsellor, providing mental health education with tips of how to be mentally resilient.



We delivered ongoing support through regular conversations to build relationships and help address other challenges they are facing.

PARTNERSHIPS



Lived experience was involved in the planning and delivery through....

- 1

Building relationships with families to identify their challenges and needs.
- 2

Gaining feedback from service users through Changing Minds Kent's Social Inclusion Club.
- 3

The pilot's delivered from Satellite Club funding and the Fit & Fed programme provided valuable feedback.
- 4

Volunteers experiencing mental health problems involved in the project, which in turn helped with their own conditions.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

132

Families fed

615

Children fed

366

Adults fed



Total funding received for **Fit and Fed programme** is **£41,500**, this included funds from **Kent Sport** and the **Big Lottery Fund**.

FEEDBACK



"Good morning, I'm so humbled by what was delivered to us, to receive such an active gift I just can't say thank you enough." (Feedback from parent).



"Feeling let down by professionals and frustrated by lack of help available and disparity between how different people are treated. We are so grateful for help received through the Fit and Fed project." (Feedback from parent).



"The Fit and Fed at Home project has been a great example of delivering an holistic support package to vulnerable communities. Our vision was to engage with those individuals that may experience daily challenges which we know can impact our mental and physical wellbeing. Through this project, we were able to support priority families with essential supplies, access to online physical activity & wellbeing support - Our vision is to develop this into a flagship programme which will be delivered all year." (Feedback from Changing Minds).

Having a holistic approach to wellbeing and listening to the community challenges and needs.

KEY TO SUCCESS



Engaging with schools and building an effective relationship to support vulnerable families and children.

SUSTAINABILITY



Funding was key to growing and extending this project to reach more vulnerable families and children. Receiving £40K from the Big Lottery Fund.



The funding helped to develop the programme, engaging with 6-7 new schools and receiving over 400 referrals. This included the introduction of a new online referral system and additional support for parents through a Life Coach.



A total of 3 Mental Health Awareness training courses were delivered for teaching staff, TA's and senior management to best support children to return to school after the pandemic.



For further sustainability and to reach more families and children there is work to be done to overcome digital exclusion to provide access to the online referral system and educational/physical activity content.

BEST PRACTICE

Partnership working is vital and aim to work with like minded organisations!



Be innovative and try something different. Use research to identify gaps and address the needs of the community.



Have the right project team in place that share your passion about health & wellbeing.



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