

MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION CHAMPIONS

RESEARCH REPORT

Introduction

Mental Health Promotion Champions [MHPC] is a community-based pilot programme that aims to train, build the capacity of, and support mental health champions to increase their own mental health literacy; and that of key adult and youth groups in the community. Mental health literacy focuses on knowledge about mental health difficulties and strategies to obtain and maintain good mental health, decrease stigma, and enhance help-seeking efficacy (Wei, McGrath, Hayden & Kutcher, 2017).

Two groups of MHPC were recruited for this pilot programme:

Young Adult Champions: Jigsaw's Youth Advocates aged 18-25. Young Adult Champions received training to deliver a mental health promotion workshop called '*Taking Care of Your Mental Health*' to their peers.

Adult Champions: Youth and Community Engagement Workers [YCEWs] employed by Jigsaw services. Adult Champions were trained to deliver a mental health promotion workshop called '*Rallying Around Young People*' to adult peers in the community and support the delivery of *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* alongside young adult champions.

The study aimed to assess the feasibility of MHPC pilot programme with regard to implementation and acceptability. Acceptability refers to whether an intervention is suitable for participants, and is judged as satisfactory, whilst implementation examines the extent to which a new intervention is successfully delivered to participants in a defined context (Bowen et al., 2009). It also sets out to explore the facilitation of 'Youth Voice' throughout the pilot programme. Youth Voice is a process that affords youth the opportunity to communicate their thoughts, attitudes, and opinions whilst also being considered valued stakeholders (Felix, 2003). Given that youth participation is a key component of Jigsaw's organisational ethos, the evaluation of Youth Voice was appropriate.

To achieve these aims, feedback was gathered from MHPC regarding the acceptability of the training they received and their experience of programme implementation. In addition, feedback regarding the acceptability and implementation of the workshops delivered by MHPC was also collected from workshop attendees (i.e., *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* and *Rallying Around Young People*).

Method

Research Design and Procedure

This study adopted a quantitative research design. Data was collected via online survey measures with Young Adult Champions, Adult Champions, and participants in attendance at the *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* and *Rallying Around Young People* workshops.

This study comprised three data collection strands:

One: Post Training Surveys with Mental Health Promotion Champions

Young Adult Champions and Adult Champions were invited to take part in a post training survey to gather feedback regarding the acceptability of the training received i.e., level of enjoyment, proportion of content/information understood, and the manner in which content was delivered.

To assess Youth Voice, Young Adult Champions were also asked to complete the *Children and Young People's Participation Checklist* (Kennan, Brady, & Forkan, 2018). This standardised measure specifically assesses the facilitation of Youth Voice in accordance with Lundy's (2007) model of child participation¹.

Two: Post Workshop Surveys with Attendees

Attendees at *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* and *Rallying Around Young People* were invited to take part in a post workshop survey to gather feedback regarding the acceptability of the workshop i.e. level of enjoyment, proportion of content/information understood, and manner in which content was delivered.

Three: Post Programme Implementation Survey with Mental Health Promotion Champions

Young Adult Champions and Adult Champions were invited to complete a post programme implementation survey once the MHPC pilot came to an end. Champions were asked to provide feedback regarding their participation in the MHPC pilot programme, with a specific focus on their experiences of delivering *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* and *Rallying Around Young People*, and central support functions such as resource availability and training.

Once again, to assess Youth Voice, Young Adult Champions were asked to complete the *Children and Young People's Participation Checklist* (Kennan, Brady, & Forkan, 2018). This standardised measure specifically assesses the facilitation of Youth Voice in accordance with Lundy's (2007) model of child participation.

Analysis

Statistical analysis was carried out on quantitative data using SPSS version 24. Qualitative data generated via open-ended questions was analysed using content analysis.

Ethics

Ethical approval was granted by the Jigsaw Research Ethics Committee: Reference code **JREC-2021-007**.

Results

Findings from the post training surveys with Mental Health Promotion Champions, post workshop surveys with attendees and post programme implementation survey with mental health promotion champions are presented below.

Post Training Feedback with Mental Health Promotion Champions

As part of the programme evaluation, Adult Champions and Young Adult Champions were invited to provide feedback on the acceptability of the workshop training programme.

Post Training Feedback – Adult Champions (YCEWs)

Seven Adult Champions attended the workshop training. Of those in attendance, five Adult Champions provided feedback on their experience of the training, indicating a 71.4% response rate.

All five (100.0% female) participants described the training as enjoyable and felt they understood all of the information presented in the training session. In addition, all Adult Champions felt the programme was either well delivered (40.0%) or very well delivered (60.0%).

Content analysis was used to analyse the open-ended feedback questions. Three (60.0%) of Adult Champions felt they learned new facilitation techniques as part of the training, while two (40.0%) found the shared learning through group discussion most useful.

“I learned different ideas and ways to deliver certain sections by getting to experience everyone else's delivery” [Adult Champion]

Post Training Feedback – Young Adult Champions (YA Members)

In total, 11 Young Adult Champions attended the workshop training, of those in attendance, five (2 Males; 3 females) gave feedback on their experience of the training programme, indicating a 45.5% response rate.

All participants described the training as enjoyable (60.0%) or very enjoyable (40.0%), and felt the training session was well (40.0%) or very well delivered (60.0%). Similarly, all participants felt they understood the information presented to them throughout the training with 60.0% understanding all of it and 40.0% most of it. In addition, all participants were satisfied with the level of preparation they received to deliver the programme in the community, a large proportion (80.0%) described feeling fairly prepared. Similarly, 80.0% of young adults felt fairly confident to deliver the workshop to their peers in the community.

Content analysis revealed that 60.0% of Young Adult Champions mentioned practicing the presentation with peers and learning from others as the most useful part of the training for them.

“Input from other Youth Advocates on how they keep calm and focused when talking in front of a crowd” [Young Adult Champion]

When it came to measuring Youth Voice, 80.0% of Young Adult Champions felt they were given time to express their views. More importantly, they felt listened to and taken seriously. See **Table 1** for an outline of the youth voice findings.

Table 1: Measuring Youth Voice

Children and Young People’s Participation Checklist		%
I was provided with appropriate information about how to be involved		
Definitely true		100.0
I was asked about my views		
Definitely true		80.0
Unsure		20.0
I was provided with the appropriate time and space to express my views		
Definitely true		100.0
I felt listened to by the YCEWs and the Trainer		
Definitely true		100.0
I know what happens to my opinions		
Definitely true		80.0
Mostly not true		20.0
I felt my views were taken seriously		
Definitely true		100.0

Overall, these findings reveal that both adult and Young Adult Champions perceived the training provided as acceptable.

Post Workshop Surveys with Attendees

The *Rallying Around Young People* and *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* workshops were delivered by Adult and Young Adult Champions between November 2021 and February 2022. Attendees at both workshops were invited to provide feedback on their experience.

Attendees at Rallying Around Young People

In total, 13 *Rallying Around Young People* workshops were delivered in which 206 people attended. Of those in attendance, 101 people took part in the evaluation indicating a response rate of 49.0%. Approximately, 27 (26.7%) were male and 73 (72.3%) female, and (1.0%) one other/non-binary.

Overall, attendees found the *Rallying Around Young People* workshop enjoyable (33.7%) or very enjoyable (62.2%), and they described it as well (15.3%) or very well delivered (84.7%). The majority of attendees understood all of the training information (90.7%), and thought the training session was definitely useful (78.6%) (see **Table 2**).

Participants were asked to describe any key learnings they took from attending the *Rallying Around Young People* workshop. Approximately, 82 attendees provided feedback of which 11 (13.2%) described the workshop as a ‘good refresher’ for them, nine (10.9%) felt they learned a new approach that they would use going forward, and six (7.3%) identified the importance of listening as a key learning for them.

Participants were also asked to outline one major take away message from the workshop. The top three messages generated via content analysis were to actively listen to young people going forward (61.3%),

to utilise the *Rallying Around Young People* approach (13.6%), and to have greater awareness for young people’s mental health (13.6%).

Table 2: Workshop feedback: Attendees at *Rallying Around Young People*

How enjoyable did you find the workshop?	%
Somewhat enjoyable	4.1
Enjoyable	33.7
Very Enjoyable	62.2
How well do you think the workshop was delivered?	
Well	15.3
Very well	84.7
How much of the information presented throughout the training did you understand?	
Most of it	9.3
All of it	90.7
Do you think the content of today’s session will be useful to you?	
Probably useful	21.4
Definitely useful	78.6

Attendees at *Taking Care of Your Mental Health*

In total, six *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* workshops were delivered in which 62 people attended. Of those in attendance, 34 took part in the evaluation indicating a response rate of 54.8%. Eight (52.9%) attendees were male, and 16 (47.1%) were female.

The majority of attendees found the workshop enjoyable (32.3%) or very enjoyable (58.1%), and they described it as well (12.9%) or very well delivered (80.6%). In addition, most attendees understood all of the information provided (90.3%), and thought the workshop was probably useful (48.4%) or definitely useful (41.9%) (see **Table 3**).

Table 3: Workshop feedback: Attendees at *Taking Care of Your Mental Health*

How enjoyable did you find the workshop?	%
Somewhat enjoyable	9.6
Enjoyable	32.3
Very Enjoyable	58.1
How well do you think the workshop was delivered?	
Okay	6.5
Well	12.9
Very well	80.6
How much of the information presented throughout the training did you understand?	
Most of it	9.7
All of it	90.3
Do you think the content of today’s session will be useful to you?	
Not likely	3.2
Don’t know	6.5
Probably useful	48.4
Definitely useful	41.9

When asked if they learned anything about mental health, 11 (47.8%) answered this question with “Yes” but did not elaborate further on what they learned about mental health, a further three (13.0%) described mental health as reflecting our overall emotional state and that was a key learning for them, while two (8.7%) learned about mental health supports available to them.

The key messages from 28 attendees at the *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* workshop included: acknowledging that we all experience mental health (25.9%), the importance of reaching out for support when needed (25.9%), and being mindful and supportive of others who may be struggling (22.2%).

Finally, responses were largely positive when attendees were asked if they liked that the workshop was delivered by a young person. This question elicited 28 responses, and more than half of attendees were in favour of a young person delivering the workshop as it gave young people a voice, and made the workshop more relatable, engaging and supportive 17 (65.0%).

Figure 1 – Workshop feedback from programme attendees



Post Programme Implementation Survey with Mental Health Promotion Champions

Once the pilot programme came to an end, Adult Champions and Young Adult Champions were asked to provide feedback on their overall experience of the programme.

Post Programme Feedback – Adult Champions (YCEWs)

In total, seven Adult Champions were involved in programme delivery, of which five provided feedback, all five (100.0%) identified as female.

Feedback from Adult Champions was predominantly positive. All five (100.0%) were in agreement that they enjoyed being a mental health champion, 80.0% felt the training prepared them to support a Youth Advocate in their role as a Young Adult Champion. Similarly, 80.0% agreed they had access to sufficient resources and materials required to deliver the workshop in community settings. Overall, 80.0% of Adult Champions felt that the Mental Health Promotion Champions pilot proved to be a success. See **Table 4** below.

Table 4: Adult Champions overall experience of the programme

I enjoyed being a mental health champion	%
Agree	60.0
Strongly Agree	40.0
The training prepared me to support my Youth Advocate in their role as a Mental Health Champion	
Disagree	20.0
Agree	40.0
Strongly Agree	40.0
I had access to all the materials/resources needed to deliver the workshop in the community	
Disagree	20.0
Agree	40.0
Strongly Disagree	40.0
Overall, the Mental Health Promotion Champion Programme was a success	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	20.0
Agree	80.0

Adult Champions described their experiences of supporting Young Adult Champions as positive and rewarding, in particular they enjoyed observing young adults engaging with young people in the community. However, they also felt more time needed to be allocated to workshop preparation, and an additional training on public speaking and facilitation skills would be beneficial for Young Adult Champions.

Some of the challenges highlighted by Adult Champions during programme implementation included the difficulty recruiting participants to take part in the *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* workshop within the designated timeline, one Adult Champion commented that this may have been due to burnout and low motivation from participants to take part in online workshops, and this was also deemed a challenge. Lastly, Adult Champions felt delivering workshops both online and face to face was time consuming, and increased the workload and preparation time, as separate practice sessions and different skills sets were required for the different modes of delivery.

Some Adult Champions felt the *Rallying Around Young People* workshop would be more suited to parents and adults in the community as opposed to experienced professionals in mental health, as it did not offer this cohort anything new in terms of supporting youth mental health. Furthermore, Adult Champions would like to see Young Adult Champions empowered to source groups going forward, and take the lead on more of these workshops, encouraging peer to peer interaction where possible.

Post Programme Feedback – Young Adult Champions (Youth Advocates)

Young Adult Champions experience of the programme was abundantly positive. Approximately, 11 Young Adult Champions delivered the *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* to peers in the community, of which four, three females (75.0%) and one male (25.0%) provided feedback on their experience (36% response rate). Young Adult Champions ranged in age from 18-22 years.

All four Young Adult Champions agreed (75.0%) or strongly agreed (25.0%), that they enjoyed being a Mental Health Champion. Similarly, all agreed (50.0%) or strongly agreed (50.0%) that the training prepared them to deliver the workshop in the community, and that they had access to all material resources required for workshop delivery. Furthermore, three (75.0%) Young Adult Champions were in agreement that being a Mental Health Champion increased their knowledge of mental health, while one (25.0%) disagreed with this statement. Nonetheless, all four (100.0%) agreed that they received sufficient support from Adult Champions to deliver the workshop, and all agreed the programme was a success.

In addition, three participants completed the children and young people’s participation checklist, and all three (100.0%) felt they were given sufficient time and space to express their views, and more importantly they felt listened to and taken seriously. See **Table 5** for an outline of the youth voice findings.

Table 5: Measuring Youth Voice Post Programme Feedback

Children and Young People’s Participation Checklist		%
I was provided with appropriate information about how to be involved		
Definitely true		100.0
I was asked about my views		
Definitely true		100.0
I was provided with the appropriate time and space to express my views		
Definitely true		100.0
I felt listened to by the YCEWs and the Trainer		
Definitely true		100.0
I know what happens to my opinions		
Unsure		33.3
Definitely true		66.7
I felt my views were taken seriously		
Definitely true		100.0

Young Adult Champions were asked to identify what they enjoyed most about taking part in the programme. Respondents noted presentation preparation and engaging with others in the community as enjoyable. They also enjoyed working with Adult Champions, describing this as a ‘fun process’ and being able to reach out to them for support if needed.

The main challenges that arose for Young Adult Champions was overcoming nerves about workshop delivery and remembering the content. However, they also mentioned that having the support of an Adult Champion made this easier to overcome.

Figure 2 – Workshop feedback from Adult and Young Adult Champions



Concluding Remarks

This evaluation set out to assess the feasibility of MHPC pilot programme with regard to implementation and acceptability. It also set out to explore the facilitation of 'Youth Voice' throughout the pilot programme.

Summary of Main Findings

Training Mental Health Promotion Champions (MHPC)

Overall, Adult and Young Adult Champions enjoyed the workshop training sessions, and understood the material presented. Young Adult Champions felt confident and prepared to deliver the workshop in community settings. On the other hand, Adult Champions felt that the training mainly focused on the workshop content and did not address workshop delivery skills. They recommended that additional teaching on facilitation and presentation skills should be given to Youth Advocates when undergoing MHPC training.

Workshop Attendees Experience

Both the *Rallying Around Young People* and *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* workshops were well received by attendees. However, the general consensus from attendees at the *Rallying Around Young People* workshop was that the workshop was more of a 'refresher' for them and that the content wasn't new to them.

Alternatively, attendees at the *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* workshops identified reaching out for support and the fact that everyone experiences mental health as key take away messages. Furthermore, the *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* workshop was also described as more relatable, engaging and supportive when delivered by a young adult champion.

Mental Health Promotion Champions (MHPC) Post Programme Experience

Adult and Young Adult Champions experience of the programme was valuable and they provided constructive feedback. Adult Champions felt supporting Young Adult Champions to deliver the workshops was positive and rewarding for them.

Some challenges pertaining to the *Rallying Around Young People* workshop were identified by Adult Champions. Firstly, they felt that the workshop did not offer attendees anything new in terms of information regarding youth mental health. Secondly, disruptions associated with Covid-19 meant that two modes of workshop delivery (face to face and online) were necessary. The extra preparation needed to facilitate the delivery of both workshops in both formats inadvertently increased Adult Champions workload and put them under significant time pressure. Going forward the hope is that all delivery will be face to face so this will no longer be an issue. Finally, Adult Champions would like to see Young Adult Champion empowered to source groups going forward, and take the lead on more of these workshops, encouraging more peer to peer interaction where possible.

Youth Voice

Overall, Youth Voice findings revealed that the vast majority of participants felt they could communicate their thoughts, attitudes, and opinions, and they felt their views were considered by adult champions. Given that youth participation is a key component of Jigsaws organisational ethos, the evaluation of Youth Voice was appropriate.

Limitations

Originally, the mental health champions programme was designed for face-to-face delivery, but due to Covid-19 restrictions still in place at the time, the mode of delivery was changed to online. This increased Adult Champions and Young Adult Champions workload, preparing for two modes of delivery. In addition, there were challenges recruiting participants for the *Taking Care of Your Mental Health* workshop due to Zoom and Teams fatigue. Furthermore, the response rate for the evaluation was relatively low, with only half of attendees who completed the workshops taking part in the evaluation. Surveys were delivered online, so online survey fatigue is the most plausible reason for the relatively low response rate.

Conclusion

To conclude, the MHPC programme was deemed feasible and acceptable by Adult and Young Adult Champions, and workshop attendees. Adult Champions would like to see an additional training on public speaking skills included as part of the training for Young Adult Champions. They also hope that young adults will be empowered to lead on more programmes like this one, and engage with their peers in community settings.

References

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