

Under Our Wing Mentoring Programme

autistic led peer support and empowerment

Dr Catriona Stewart



SWAN: Scottish Women's Autism Network

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in partnership with Scottish Autism



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with additional support by the Forestry Commission in Scotland



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to evidence the benefits of peer-led mentoring for autistic women and girls



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why peer-support?



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SWAN: Scottish Women's Autism Network 2012

in response to research study 2011



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Key drivers for qualitative methodology and innovative methods:

- facilitation of the authentic voices of autistic girls with anxiety
- lived experience narrative



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Where can we be what we are?*

Stewart C 2012 Where can we be what we are? Good Autism Practice 13 (1) May 2012 Birmingham: BILD



*'Home' defined by Van Manen as 'where we can be what we are' Van Manen *



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UOW: a response to glaring gaps identified in education and pastoral care of young autistic women, gaps with lifelong impact on individuals as they have to navigate their way into adulthood in a world that doesn't understand or accommodate them, often hampered by poor mental health and without the necessary tools for positive self-care



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why peer mentoring?



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Game changer?



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Game changer?

from - informing and advocating service providers and decision makers



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Game changer?

from - informing and advocating service providers and decision makers

to - empowering and enabling autistic women and girls



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the programme



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the programme

stages: design - conceptual, ethical, practical
building a pathway for participation
processes and protocols, risk, safeguarding
content
delivery



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the programme

content: co-production model

mentoring training: Dinah Bennett OBE FRSA (ICEE)

autism training: Project co-ordinator, me

outdoors forestry bush craft, creativity, team building:

Craig Thomson Operation Play Outdoors



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the programme

key outcomes:

self identity

confidence

capacity

citizenship



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demographics

women aged 15 - 60

accessed through SWAN network and local school

ft employed; pt employed; unemployed;

ft parent; college student;

school student – in school, in school on reduced timetable,
home-schooled

range of sexuality and gender ID including transgender and non-binary
within reasonable reach of Glasgow (inc Inverclyde + Edin)



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evaluation



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evaluation

External: Yolanda Gibb Durham University



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evaluation

External: Yolanda Gibb Durham University

reflexive

flexible

iterative



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evaluation

External: Yolanda Gibb Durham University

reflexive

flexible

iterative

developmental

innovative



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evaluation

ongoing feedback at every stage

reflective diaries (including co-ordinator and manager)

qualitative evaluation with interviews at stages throughout programme

entry interview - exit interview

existing QOL tool

building new QOL model specifically around the project



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‘We had another amazing day in the Woodlands...we brought the mentor & the mentee groups together for a day of crafting, bushcraft & team building activities. A big thank you to Craig, of Operation Play Outdoors, our trainer, and to The Forestry Commission Scotland for ongoing support. Our day was described by one of our group as "magical mentoring”.’



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LINKS

SWAN website <http://swanscotland.org/>

Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/swans.scotland/>

Scottish Autism's Right Click for Women and Girls

<https://www.scottishautism.org/services-support/support-families/women-and-girls-online-support>

Spectrum Women Book <http://www.jkp.com/jkpblog/2018/09/spectrum-women/>



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Thank you

