

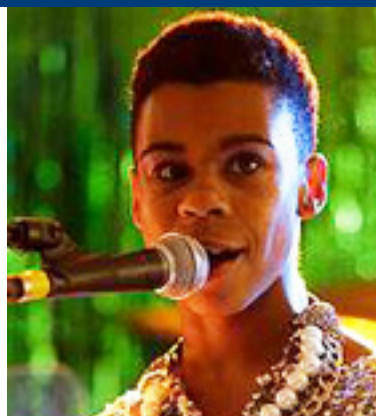
# My Future Choices

For disabled young people, their families and people who support them

Issue 26 | April 2014



## What's in this issue



Heart n Soul's Allsorts



Actress Storme Toolis

Zombie Crash

**Beat Express**

Wonder Wac Arts

**Percy Hedley  
Employability Project**

And much more!

**Transition  
Information  
Network**

The magazine of the Transition Information Network

## What's in this issue

- 3 Policy update
- 4 Shut up and listen!
- 6 Heart n Soul's Allsorts
- 8 Storme Toolis
- 10 Wonder Wac Arts
- 12 Creating Japanese comedies in English!
- 14 Percy Hedley employability project
- 16 Hertfordshire's transition guide
- 18 My work experience
- 19 Takeover Day 2013
- 20 Coaching football
- 21 Where am I now

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## Hello from TIN!

Welcome to another issue of My Future Choices. This issue is all about making art! Whether you sing, act, host a radio show, film videos, perform circus tricks, paint landscapes, write comedies or enjoy ceramics.

Here at TIN we think all young people should be able to express themselves creatively. On page 4 we hear about Zombie Crash and Beat Express - two bands who are leading lights in the learning disabled music scene; page 6 introduces us to the Allsorts project by creative arts company Heart n Soul; on page 8 we interview actress Storme Toolis - star of New Tricks on BBC 1; on page 10 we learn about the Wac Arts community hub; and on page 12 we learn about Japanese storytelling.

My Future Choices wouldn't be complete without hearing directly from young people. On page 18 Habibor talks about his work experience at the Freeman Hospital; on page 19 Adam talks about spending a day working at the TIN office; on page 20 Dennis talks about gaining his football coaching certificate; and on page 21 Wesley updates us on what he is studying at college and his plans for the future.

We also manage to squeeze in an article about Percy Hedley's employability project and Hertfordshire's new transition guide designed by young people!

Best wishes

**Lettice Wigby**

### What is the Transition Information Network?

The Transition Information Network (TIN) is an alliance of organisations and individuals with the common aim of improving the experience of disabled young people's transition to adulthood. TIN aims to be a source of information and good practice standards for disabled young people, their families and people who support them. TIN is based at the Council for Disabled Children, the umbrella body for the disabled children's sector in England.

### TIN Membership

Membership to TIN is free. You will receive our e-bulletin and can order copies of My Future Choices magazine. Register online at: [www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk/membership](http://www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk/membership)



# Policy update

By Caroline Bennett from Preparing for Adulthood



The Government is changing the law on special educational needs (SEN) and disability to make it focus more on professionals working together to support young people to achieve their aspirations. The changes are designed to give disabled young people and those with SEN a greater say over what support and services are available locally. The changes also aim to give young people a greater say in their own support and help young people prepare for adulthood. These changes will affect disabled children and young people from 0-25 years old.

The Government is also changing the law on care and support for people aged 18 and over. This change aims to provide people with greater say over their care and support and also focuses on people working together.

The Preparing for Adulthood team have been helping local areas to think about how these changes can work.

## What does it mean for young people preparing for adulthood?

The new system wants to focus on good outcomes for disabled young people as they prepare for adulthood. Good outcomes are things such as paid employment, good health, independent living, and friends, relationships and being involved in your community.

These are some of the things the Government are trying to make better:

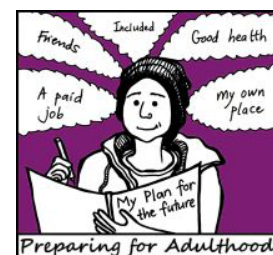
- Involvement of young people in planning
- Young people's right to make decisions
- Information, Advice and Support for young people
- Preparing for Adulthood with better life outcomes

These are some of the ways they are doing it:

- Everyone working together - A new, single plan called an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan from 0-25. This means that if you have special educational needs all your support will be recorded in one place. In September 2014 EHC plans will replace SEN statements
- Local authorities must develop a Local Offer of support which can be accessed by children, young people and their families
- Young people must be involved in planning their support and making decisions about their future
- From April 2015 young people are able to request a Child's Needs Assessment before the age of 18 to help plan for the care and support they might need after they turn 18
- Young people must be able to access information, advice and support. There must be a service that will provide this directly to young people.

If you would like to find out more information regarding the changes in the law you can look here: [www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk](http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk)

If you would like to read about young people's views on how they will receive their SEN support you can download 'Our Voice, Our Say' from: [www.transitioninforonetwork.org.uk/ovos](http://www.transitioninforonetwork.org.uk/ovos)



The Preparing for Adulthood programme is delivered by a partnership between the National Development Team for inclusion and the Council for Disabled Children.





# SHUT UP AND LISTEN!



Beat Express (left to right): Ryan – guitar, Claire – keyboards & vocals, Chris - drums, Lee – guitar & vocals.

## **“We’re wicked and completely wild!” says Zombie Crash.**

Lisa Wolfe of Carousel writes about these pioneering rockers.

**No Mercy** is the debut album from one of the learning disabled music scene’s leading lights. **Zombie Crash** is a loud, noisy, chaotic heavy metal band of six friends writing songs about whatever they please, including vampires, zombies, girls and rocking out in a band.

It is a heavy metal band with a difference; all six members have learning disabilities. Their differences don’t restrict but rather give them the freedom to create music and performances that are wild, unhinged and true to themselves.

Influenced by the likes of Iron Maiden, Slipknot, Motörhead and Red Hot Chili Peppers, Zombie Crash formed as a quartet in 2009 when arts organisation Carousel and its music initiative **Shut Up and Listen!** gave them the opportunity to make the music they want to make. Two new members recently joined the band.

Making music together comes easily to them; they collaborate on writing the lyrics and Ryan will come up with a riff which the rest of the band then build on. Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings at Brighton Electric Studios which hosts artists such as The Cure, Nick Cave, Alison Moyet, Mumford and Sons and old-school rockers Saxon.

*“The hardest challenge for us is trying to stay appropriate but remaining hardcore”* says the band.

Relishing the opportunity to play live, **Zombie Crash** are always up for gigs. Their favourites so far have been on tour with the Finnish punks **Pertti Kurikan Nimipaivat** (PKN) to London, Leeds, Sheffield and Brighton.

*“The ultimate activity for any band to put themselves through is to go on tour, to be as active as you possibly can”* says Ryan.

The tour was recommended in Mojo music magazine and on the Guardian blog – high praise indeed.



Performing at the Supernormal Festival of experimental arts and music in Oxfordshire last year was another highlight. The band now has its eyes on the Download Festival, Bloodstock and Oktoberfest – watch this space!

Guitarist Ryan also plays in another Carousel band, **Beat Express**. As the name suggests, their music is more pop oriented, with clever, catchy lyrics by vocalist Lee. Chris plays drums and Claire keyboards. **Beat Express** have released two albums and a music video and have played gigs all over the country.

**Zombie Crash**, **Beat Express** and the other three bands that are part of Carousel's Shut Up And Listen! music initiative, demonstrate how learning disabled musicians can express their creativity in their own way. Asked what advice they have for other young people wanting to start a band, Zombie Crash say:

1. Don't do it for financial gain!
2. Make sure you are all friends and get along
3. Don't copy our name!

Find out more about **Zombie Crash** and the other bands at [www.shutupandlisten.org.uk](http://www.shutupandlisten.org.uk) where you can listen to tracks from No Mercy. Or check out [www.zombiecrash.bandcamp.com](http://www.zombiecrash.bandcamp.com)

**Shut Up And Listen!** also presents a monthly radio show, playing music by learning disabled bands, with interviews and news stories. You can listen online or download a podcast from here: [www.carousel.org.uk/projects/shut-up-and-listen](http://www.carousel.org.uk/projects/shut-up-and-listen)



Zombie Crash (left to right): Luc – Guitar & Vocals, Alex – Bass, Ryan – Vocals & Guitar, James – Vocals, David – Drums, Darrel – Keyboards & Vocals

### About Carousel



Over the last 30 years, arts charity Carousel has worked to ensure that people with a learning disability can make a full contribution to our communities and be respected as equal members. Carousel activities include music, through its bands and radio show, film making and presentation through Oska Bright and performance work. It has a choir, The Carousel Singers, and shares its expertise through training and events such as Creative Minds. Find out how you can get involved and support Carousel at [www.carousel.org.uk](http://www.carousel.org.uk)





# Heart n Soul's Allsorts



**Heart n Soul's Allsorts, a new project open to young adults (18+) with learning disabilities who are in transition.**

**Heart n Soul** is an award-winning creative arts company. We believe in the talents and power of people with learning disabilities. We provide creative spaces for disabled and non-disabled artists and participants to come together and develop and share their ideas. Our work is about art, taking part, training and sharing.

We provide a range of opportunities for people to take part, train in a new skill, or develop their artistic talents. Our mission is to make a more creative, fun, equal and open world for everyone.

Heart n Soul's Allsorts provides a supportive, social and creative space for young adults who are in transition and looking for a suitable alternative to day centres. Allsorts is a place to try new things, make friends and have fun!

We work with professional artists to deliver high-quality and accessible arts workshops. Previous sessions have included playing music

and conducting with The London Symphony Orchestra, dance with Candoco Dance Company and circus and aerial skills with Upswing.

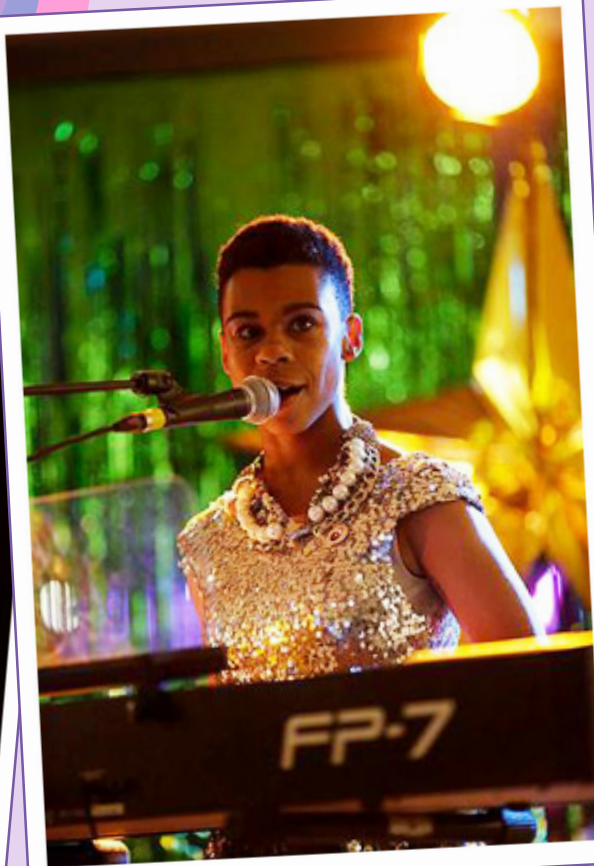
Outside of the arts workshops, the Lucky Dip room at Allsorts provides a social space to meet new people and make friends in a relaxed setting. Lunchtime in the Albany Café is also a chance for everyone to get together and share their experiences of the day. Allsorts participant Shelley says:

*"It makes me feel very good coming. I get outside, see my friends, otherwise I'm at home, bored doing nothing at all. It really means a lot."*

Allsorts provides the opportunity to learn new skills and can prove an important next step into employment. Twenty-three year-old Lewisham resident Kali (pictured above) has been involved with Heart n Soul since 2010 and regularly attends and enjoys the Allsorts music sessions. Outside of Allsorts, Kali has continued her development as an artist with Heart n Soul as







the lead singer of the band Too Hot For Candy.

As well as rehearsals and songwriting sessions, Kali regularly plays gigs across the country. Kali has also performed at the opening of the London 2012 Paralympic Games and has been featured in The Guardian Weekender magazine.

Allsorts take place at The Albany in Deptford in South East London and is fully wheelchair accessible. We have a social worker assigned to the project to ensure that Safeguarding procedures are in place and to assist in setting up Personal Budgets.

For those on Personal Budgets we offer weekly arts activities from 10am – 5pm for 32 weeks per year with the potential for this to be increased to 50 weeks later this year. Transport within Lewisham can also be arranged at a cost of £5.50 per return journey, from 9am and returning from 5:15pm onwards. We are able to offer mild-medium levels of personal care, dependent on individual needs.

For those not on Personal Budgets we offer weekly arts activities on a drop-in basis from

10am-5pm for 32 weeks per year only. Transport within Lewisham can also be arranged, dependent on availability. We are not able to offer one-to-one support for those not on Personal Budgets but staff and volunteers are on-hand throughout the day to offer general support and assistance.

We offer a drop-service for those not on Personal Budgets and for anyone who has not been to Allsorts before. So if you would like to experience Allsorts please do come down and have a look for yourself – tickets are £5 for the whole day and there is no need to book. The dates for the current season are Thursday 24 April - Thursday 12 June.

If you have any questions or would like any further information please contact our Project Access Officer, Lisa:  
Call: 020 8694 1632  
Email: [Lisa@heartsoul.co.uk](mailto:Lisa@heartsoul.co.uk)

You can also see the full programme for this season at the Heart n Soul website [www.heartsoul.co.uk](http://www.heartsoul.co.uk)





# - Storme Toolis -



Storme has been a professional working actress for 3 years.

## **How did you get started in acting?**

I started when I was in school. I was 13. I was given a part as an Ugly Sister in a class room exercise of Cinderella the Pantomime and from there I pursued it through my local theatre group. I also took it for GCSE and A-Level, and I'm currently in my final year of my degree of Drama and English literature at the University of Kent. I graduate in July.

## **What do you enjoy about acting?**

I enjoy the escapism of it. I enjoy learning about other characters. I'm really into Shakespeare and I enjoy performing Shakespeare the most. I like entering someone else's mind. I like imagining that I'm someone else and being a character. I like the fantasy side of it. I like everything that builds up to the process of a show. Theatre in particular because you're close with your cast members and you have a lot of fun. The process from rehearsals to putting on a show is really good.

## **What don't you enjoy about acting?**

There are long hours. It's difficult to make a career out of acting, particularly if you have a disability, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't

do it. My ambition is to try as much as I possibly can and get as far as I can within the profession. But you have to be realistic and it can be disheartening. Rejection is a massive part of it. And sitting around waiting for people to call you about auditions. And you spend a lot of your time not working. And the time you do work you have to make the most of. But if you love it and if it's what you want to do then you just need to have enough drive and passion to carry on regardless.

## **How did you choose your course and university?**

I've always known what I have wanted to do for my career. Drama was the only thing I wanted to study. I'm glad that I chose it. I love it. It was just a case of finding a university that I was able to do it at. Drama is not the most conventional degree for a disabled person to do. I had to find an accessible department and accommodation. Also, finding a university that would see me as an advantage to them rather than a challenge.

**"I've learnt a lot about myself  
and about how to grow up  
and be independent."**







### Has the course gone well?

Yes, It's been really, really good. I've had a really good time. I've learnt a lot about myself and about how to grow up and be independent. I think university is a challenging time for everyone but I'm particularly proud of myself to get all the way through. I think it's very important to have really good ambition if you're a disabled young person because it's very easy to get sucked into the 'I don't want to do anything' way of thinking or not know what you can do. So you have to take full advantage of everything. Push yourself as far as you can. Because what's the use of life if it's not to be used? It can sometimes feel like a massive challenge if you're 18 and you don't know what you want to do. And particularly if you're disabled and sometimes people tell you 'maybe you should do this'. But just do what feels right for yourself. That's the most important thing.

### What have been some of your favourite roles?

My favourite role at the moment is Holly Griffin in New Tricks on BBC 1. I'm a main cast member and I've been doing that for about a year. I play the daughter of Danny Griffin who is played by Nicholas Lyndhurst. My character Holly is an 18 year old university student and she is a very ambitious, talkative, attractive, confident, sassy and independent person. And that's the kind of image of disability that I want to put out there, rather than it being a problem it should be something that everyone embraces and uses and goes out there and kicks a bit of butt. Holly's actually got a boyfriend in the series and that was very challenging and good to do because disability and relationships is another stigma.

### What advice do you have for disabled young people who are interested in acting as a career?

I would say watch as much theatre as you can. Find what you really like and hone in on it. Go to local theatre groups and get involved. Sign up to agents. Push yourself out there. Don't think that you can't do it just because someone tells you you can't do it. You can do it! Sign up to as many mailing lists as you can, join societies, amateur dramatics, anything! Study it as much as you can. There's a phrase that I learnt from one of my drama teachers - 'Don't punk out'. It means don't give up.



"She is a very ambitious, talkative, attractive, confident, sassy and independent. And that's the kind of image of disability that I want to put out there."

Follow Storme on Twitter! @StormeToolsie

Follow TIN too! @TIN\_Talks



# WONDER Wac ARTS

**Wac Arts** is a community hub delivering performing arts and media education and training for young people. It has been based in Camden, north London for over 35 years.

**Wonder Wac Arts** special education needs and disability programme provides a comprehensive range of inclusive activities for young people with learning disabilities. Our on-site projects provide performing arts and media workshops to develop creativity, improve communication, support independence skills and, most importantly, to provide fun and enjoyment. We also offer short breaks supported by our local authority which include a residential programme where we assist our young people on weekend trips during term time and week long trips during the summer holidays. We use venues in rural locations with adventurous outdoor education activities, allowing our groups to have exciting and challenging experiences, as well as learning to take care of themselves away from home.

**Wac Arts Wonder Web** was one of ten projects funded by BBC Children in Needs Fun and Friendship grant scheme from 2010-2013, in which young people with Autism spectrum disorder and other mild to moderate disabilities developed an online media portal to showcase their creative work with the world. This included films, animations, music, a radio station and even an online television station, all conceived and run by the students. Over the course of the project they hosted nearly a hundred radio shows building up a loyal listenership and one short film went viral on Youtube with over 6,000,000 views to date!



Creating and sharing their work with young people from the other projects profoundly boosted their self-esteem. This combined with the media techniques they learnt, greatly enhanced their communication, confidence and independence skills. They were invited on many exciting trips to places such as the Houses of Parliament, BBC Television Centre, Salford Media City, where they spoke to large audiences about their experiences on the project and interviewed celebrities as roving reporters for their radio station.

For more information please visit the Wac Arts website: [www.WacArts.co.uk](http://www.WacArts.co.uk), facebook page: [www.facebook.com/WacArts](https://www.facebook.com/WacArts), or contact us by email on: [info@WacArts.co.uk](mailto:info@WacArts.co.uk) or telephone: 020 7692 5800.





## FRANKIE'S EXPERIENCE AT WAC ARTS



### How did you hear about Wac Arts?

At my secondary school, someone who used to work for Wac Arts was the speech and language therapist. It was around the same time that I was diagnosed with autism when I was about 11 or 12. She told me about Wac Arts and what they did. One of the staff members called Mel Ancliff told me that there was a course that I might be interested in called Wac Wonder Web.

### What did you do on the course?

I learnt about how to safely use the Internet and social networking sites. I also took part in the Wac Wonder Web radio show.

### What did you gain from this experience?

I learnt how to use media in the correct way. I made loads of new friends who I am still friends with now. My whole experience at Wac Arts has been really positive not just because of the people I have met but because of how understanding they are of me and my needs.

### What has been the highlight of your experience at Wac Arts?

We go on trips with Wac Arts that have been the highlight of my experience here. I went on a trip to Alton Towers with all of the friends I made at Wac Arts. We had a residential we went to in Essex so I got to have a holiday with my friends.

## EXAMPLES OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORK



### Example 1: Radio Show by Wac Arts Wonder Web and Zinc Arts young people

**Description:** Recorded in February 2013 half term this is a classic example of the radio show our students worked so hard to develop their skills on over the last 4 years.

**Link:** [www.WacArts.co.uk/Radio](http://www.WacArts.co.uk/Radio)



### Example 2: Video by Wac Arts Wonder Web and Mencap Cardiff young people

**Description:** Hummucide – One of many short films made in February 2013 during a road trip around the UK to celebrate the end of the BBC Children in Need Fun and Friendship project, this particular film was made with young people from Mencap Cardiff's Play our Way (POW) project.

**Link:** [www.WacArts.co.uk/WonderWeb](http://www.WacArts.co.uk/WonderWeb)



# Creating Japanese Comedies in English!

by Sayaka Yoshida



My name is Sayaka. I am 29 years old and live in central Japan. I have partial sight due to congenital eye disease and use braille in my daily life. I studied English-Japanese interpretation at university. In 2010 I visited the UK for 3 months to study at the Royal National Institute of the Blind and Deaf-Blind UK. It is both my ambition and passion to help blind people to access information more easily.

## Hobbies

I love speaking English. When I was in secondary school my teacher told me "Speak English rhythmically like singing a song. Don't be afraid of your visual impairment when you study languages." I was moved by his advice. I found it very interesting to learn English and communicate with people all over the world. I also enjoy listening to old Japanese comedies. I enjoy translating Japanese comedies into English and add my own personal touch. I also enjoy scrapbooking.

## Rakugo

I remake Japanese 'Rakugo' stories in English. Rakugo is traditional Japanese storytelling. The storyteller plays every character in the story. The storyteller memorizes the entire story instead of reading from a script. If the storyteller is good the listeners laugh at the jokes.

I practice telling Rakugo stories during English conversation lessons. I enjoy creating new stories and sharing them with people in a fun way. I hope my foreign friends enjoy my stories at the international exchange events that I attend.

## I fear Manju

I would like to share with you my favorite story, "I fear Manju".

**Narrator:** One day some university students are chatting in their halls of residence.

**Yuki:** We have different likes and dislikes. What do you like the best?

**Chi:** I like cooking.

**Haru:** I like eating delicious food.

**Yuki:** How interesting! Chi likes cooking. Haru likes eating. How about Kumi?

**Kumi:** I like lots of sweets like cake, cookies and fruit sandwiches.

**Yuki:** That's marvelous. I love them too.

**Kumi:** And fruit omelets.

**Yuki:** What?

**Kumi:** And chocolate stew, chocolate noodles and umm...

**Yuki:** OK, enough, enough! You have such strange eating habits.

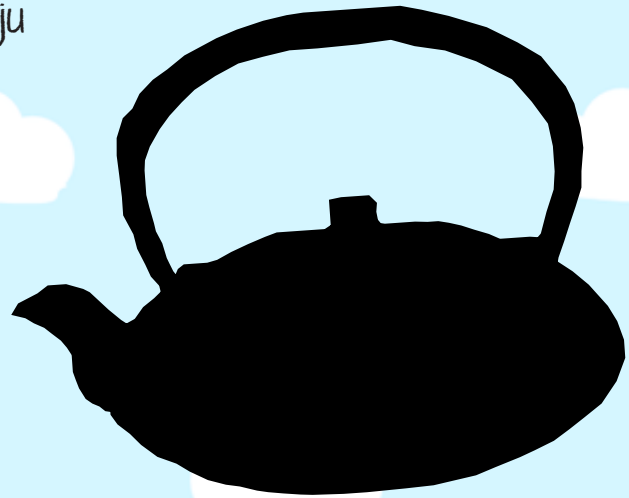
**Kumi:** How about you?

**Yuki:** Of course, the restaurant Masa!

**Kumi:** I see. You shouted "Masa, I love you!" to the talking teddy bear at the department store yesterday, didn't you?



Manju



**Yuki:** Yeah. OK, why don't we talk about our dislikes next?

**Chi:** I'm afraid of bees.

**Haru:** I'm afraid of snakes.

**Kumi:** I'm afraid of centipedes.

**Yuki:** Oh dear, they're scary and dangerous. I'm afraid of our tea ceremony teacher.

**Haru:** I totally agree with you. She's so strict.

**Kumi:** Hey, Sakura, tell us what you fear. You haven't spoken.

**Sakura:** I don't fear anything.

**Yuki:** You're kidding?

**Chi:** All of us said what we fear. Tell us yours.

**Sakura:** It's scary just to say. Actually, I fear Manju.

**Kumi:** What? What did you say?

**Yuki:** Manju? You mean the Japanese sweet bun with bean jam filling?

**Sakura:** Please don't say that! I feel chills. I'm going to bed. See you later.

**Yuki:** What's wrong with her?

**Chi:** I'm not sure.

**Haru:** She fears Manju for some reason.

**Yuki:** Listen, I have a plan!

**Chi:** I know what it is.

**Yuki:** Let's buy a lot of Manju and put them by her bedside while she's sleeping.

**Chi:** Sounds fun!

**Haru:** But is that a good idea?

**Yuki:** Sure. It's just Rakugo, just a joke. There's a Japanese sweet shop nearby.

**Chi:** Let's go!

**Narrator:** This is a group of ladies that we should be afraid of! They buy lots and lots of Manju and put them by Sakura's bedside like a Pyramid. They are looking at her from the door quietly. "Oh my gosh!" shouts Sakura. After that...

**Yuki:** Why is it so quiet? Is Sakura OK?

**Chi:** Let's have a look.

**Haru:** Ohhhh! She's eating Manju!

**Sakura:** Hi everyone, good morning.

**Yuki:** Hey, what are you doing?

**Sakura:** I'm enjoying my Manju. Thanks a lot.

**Chi:** You lied to us! You said you fear Manju so we bought lots and lots of Manju.

**Haru:** What do you really fear?

**Sakura:** Hmmm, I fear a nice cup of tea.

# Percy Hedley Employability Project

Northern  
Gas  
Networks



The Percy Hedley Foundation's Employability Project works with employers across the North East to help them understand about disabilities and to develop employability opportunities for disabled people. This project acts as a link between employers, supported employment organisations and disabled people. The aims are to develop employability opportunities for disabled people using creative and innovative engagement methods, such as:

## Site Visits

A small group of students visit an employer for a tour to see first hand the work that goes on in the organisation. This helps them understand the various jobs that are done on a day to day basis. Visits to the Dog and Cat Shelter, Lomas Training, Northern Gas Networks, The Theatre Royal, to name just a few. Some of these visits have led to Work Placements.

## Work Placements

Here the employers offer a work place opportunities for disabled people. This project works supporting the employer and the student. Some of the fantastic work placements have been at: TDR, The Environment Agency, Pegasus Riding Centre, Kirkley Hall Campus, Greggs plc, Bond Dickinson, The Theatre Royal, Mears Group, Seaton Delaval Hall, the list goes on.

Placements have been taken up from people from all parts of the Foundation, including: Percy Hedley Upper School, Northern Counties School, Percy Hedley College, Adult Services and external agencies, including: Gates, Voiceworks and TRAIN.

There are a wide variety of placements such as: catering, gardening, photography, business and administration and we are so very proud to say we have one young man working on a full time, paid apprenticeship. We have 10 people in paid work, 5 of which are permanent thanks to our fantastic employers, Cestria Housing, TDR, Intu at Metrocentre, Theatre Royal, Northumberland County Council and the NHS.

## Hedleys at Intu at Metrocentre

We have a fantastic relationship with the Metrocentre. They have helped us to offer many opportunities to our students and learners throughout the whole Foundation. One of the most successful projects has been the Hedley's shop which opened its doors again in 2013 for the third time. This was a fantastic opportunity to showcase the work and talents of Percy Hedley Foundation service users. Many items were designed and made by disabled people including paintings, ceramics, home made cards, cushions and much more. We teamed up with other partners who helped support the Foundation, those involved were: The Newcastle Poster Company, Tyne & Wear Museums, Northern Heritage and the Moon Gallery.

## Employability Job Shop Sessions

With the help of an employer students get the opportunity to find out about a company, the work it does and if they would like to visit or go to help out and do some work there. These sessions are great and the students understand more about their own skills and how they can use them in the world of work. We have had ZAZU hairdressers along, Lomax Training, Aura



Learning, Dog and Cat Shelter, Barclays Bank – again – to name just a few.

### Equality, Diversity, Disability and Customer Service training

We also offer Equality, Diversity and Disability Awareness training to all employers. We are able to offer these sessions for free which can last from 1 – 3 hours. The sessions are mix of group activity and presentation which are fun and interactive.

We have also been working with a group of Service Users, mentored by Disability North, who have developed their own Disability and Customer Service training. So far they have delivered to 30 different organisations and over 100 staff. Feedback from these sessions are amazing. It has to be one of the best sessions available, developed and delivered by disabled people who can explain in detail good customer service.

### Community Projects

We also organise team exercises for employers in areas such as horticulture and painting/ decorating. In 2013 we did a joint project with Percy Hedley Upper School, Northern Counties School and Percy Hedley College. We were invited by Northern Gas Networks to paint a mural which will appear on bus stops, vans and posters throughout the region.

The company's artist in residence, Mick Hand, designed the 8ft long 'paint by numbers' mural which shows various aspects of Northern Gas Network's work including excavations, gas holders and company vehicles. 15 children helped to complete the painting over three days.

To find out more about the Percy Hedley Employability Project telephone: 0191 281 7532, email: [info@employabilityphf.org.uk](mailto:info@employabilityphf.org.uk) or visit: [www.percyhedley.org.uk/employability](http://www.percyhedley.org.uk/employability)

Hedley's shop



Lomax Workshop

Disability Customer Service Training







# Hertfordshire's Transition Guide



By Jo Necchi from Hertfordshire County Council

Young people approaching transition age took part in a consultation to help Hertfordshire County Council's Youth Connexions service develop a Transition Guide for young people.

Transition can be a daunting time for many young people, as it is when they start to think about their future and what they would like to do when they leave school.

The Transition Guide aims to make this a smoother process by helping young people with additional needs navigate their way through the process. It includes information about transition planning, post-16 choices, social care, health, money, leisure, housing issues and useful contacts.

Working in partnership with Lonsdale School, Hertfordshire County Council organised an event to capture young people's views about

the Transition Guide, in particular what the contents and design should look like. The young people watched a DVD about the Transition Guide and were asked what they thought of it. Most of the young people felt that it had the right balance of content, but they were very keen to share ideas about how it could be improved. Brandon said:

*“There were a lot of people in the video; it was alright for me but it has to meet everybody else's needs.”*

When asked if he'd like to answer questions with stickers Brandon said:

*“It might be a bit babyish but there are always ways round it like using software on a computer. I'm thinking of access - personally, I could type information but others might like stickers to stick on.”*





Freddie added:

*“ I understood about the annual review. I understood the DVD and enjoyed it. More pictures and less words is better because it is clearer and I can read this. Also show people doing things to see what it is saying. YouTube is the best website. ”*

Zeneb prints from her machine, but agreed with Freddie that website links would be useful.

The young people had many ideas about where they see themselves in the future. Dominic explained:

*“ I'd like to live close to my family but not with them forever. I'd like my independence. ”*

Jordan said:

*“ I'd like to work in a shop. I don't want to go to college but I'd like to know more about the different trips and clubs colleges offer. ”*

Patricia Walker, Learning difficulties and/or disabilities Strategy and Commissioning Manager, explained:

*“ The teenage years can be a challenging time for a disabled young person and their family. We want to make sure that we listen to the views of children and young people so that we get the information in the Transition Guide right and make sure that it is presented in the most accessible way for young people with additional needs. ”*



The Transition Guide is available to download from here:  
[www.youthconnexions-hertfordshire.org](http://www.youthconnexions-hertfordshire.org)

For more information please visit the Hertfordshire County Council website:  
[www.hertsdirect.org](http://www.hertsdirect.org)



# My work experience



Habibor working at the computer



Habibor getting his certificate from Dorothy

My name is Habibor and I am a student at Sir Charles Parsons School in Walker, Newcastle. I have had a great experience doing a work placement through Project Choice with the Hotel services at the Freeman Hospital, which I would like to tell you about.

I am generally a confident student and enjoy school and learning new things, but this was something very different for me as I had never been in a work place environment before. I felt a little bit nervous as I would be in a new building, working with new people and doing things I hadn't tried before. My supervisor Dorothy was great and helped me to be less nervous, she gave me lots of support and time to get used to the new environment and she explained the things she wanted me to do very clearly. Everyone was very friendly and made me feel comfortable and at home from the start.

One of my duties was to use the computer and input information for orders from each ward and department. I enjoyed this as I could use the ICT skills I already knew but I also learned to send emails use databases and how to print and scan the notes and orders for the work files. Another role I enjoyed was

working on reception. I greeted people and helped them with their enquires when they arrived at the department. I think that I was good at this part of the job as I enjoy talking to new people and find it easy to chat and welcome them.

I found that having a placement over one day for a whole term rather than all squashed into one week was great as it let me practice all of my new skills and I really grew in confidence. I felt like by the end of my time I was working very independently with my tasks and I knew enough to solve problems and work out what should happen next by myself.

Now that I have completed my placement with Dorothy and the rest of the team at the Freeman Hospital I am very excited to find another placement where I can gain more experience. I have started doing some research myself and have asked for support from staff at school and at Project Choice. I would recommend anyone who has the chance to go on work experience to definitely go for it, as it has helped me to think about my future and given me the confidence to imagine myself doing all sorts of different types of jobs.

# TAKEOVER DAY

TIN @TIN\_Talks  
As part of @NCBTweets's #TakeoverDay, I'm working with @TIN\_Talks to develop my media skills & gain vital experience! -Adam.  
Expand    Reply   Retweet   Favourite   More



Young people who spent Takeover Day at the National Children's Bureau. Adam is on the far left.

On Friday 22nd November it was the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Day 2013. On Takeover Day children and young people get the chance to work with adults for the day and be involved in decision-making.

Here at TIN we had Adam, aged 16, spend the day working with our Information and Communications Assistant Lettice. Adam was one of five young people to 'Takeover' at the National Children's Bureau where TIN is based. Adam is from London and is extremely interested in media and social media.

The first decision Adam made when he arrived was to decide what he wanted to do. Lettice had put together a long list of activities that Adam could work on. Adam decided to write tweets and a facebook post for TIN. Adam also decided to investigate three ways TIN could improve its social media activity. Adam then presented his ideas to Caroline, the manager of TIN.

In the afternoon Adam decided to video interview the other young people and staff

involved in Takeover day. Adam wrote the interview questions, carried out the interviews and edited the video. Adam said about his video:

*"This video shows two young people telling us what they have learnt and benefited from in the Takeover Day but also why they believe NCB is such an amazing charity!"*

What Adam said about Takeover Day 2014:

*"I feel honoured and privileged to be a part of such a wonderful day. It was a great experience and it gave me a real insight on the life of work! I cannot wait to do something like this again."*

What Lettice said about Takeover Day 2014:

*"Takeover Day showed staff the skills young people can bring to the work place and gave us new ideas for our work. I'd liked to see even more staff and young people participate next year!"*

You can watch Adam's video here:  
[www.transitioninfonet.org.uk/takeoverday](http://www.transitioninfonet.org.uk/takeoverday)

To participate in Takeover Day 2014 visit:  
[www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/takeover\\_day](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/takeover_day)

# Coaching football

My name is Dennis, I'm 23 years old, I live in West Yorkshire and I have Fragile X Syndrome. I play football for the Bradford City Disability Football Club. I want to tell you about my coaching football certificate.

## Second Half Project

I started playing football at school and won many Man of the Match awards. During college I got involved with the Second Half Project. The aim of the project was to empower young people by building their confidence and self esteem and teaching them new skills. It involved a mixture of class room activity and football activities leading on to a FA level 1 coaching football certificate.

## Coaching football certificate

I was determined to achieve the FA level 1 coaching football certificate like my class mates who were more able. At first my tutor and class mates were not sure that I would achieve this qualification as the assessor for the course was from the FA association and the course involved lots of worksheets, planning sessions and delivering a session to the class. The qualification seemed impossible but I spent all my time practising, observing, planning, taking the initiative and leadership in trying my best to deliver the session, and giving 100% attendance and commitment. This behaviour changed the mind of my tutor and my class mates who became determined to support me.



## Support

Paula, the manager of the Second Half Project, liaised with my mother so that extra support at home could be provided. My mother prepared a visual step by step session guide to help me to remember the steps. I practiced using the guide and my class mates supported me.

## Assessment

During the four days of assessment I proudly guarded the FA level 1 folder which was given to me on the course and I stayed focused on what was taking place.

## Success

The news of my success was given to my mother by Paula and Bradford City football club coach Paul Jubb. Everyone in the group was proud of my success, my mother had tears in her eyes. It was team work, believing in my ability and giving me the opportunity to deliver the session in a different way that did the trick.

During this time I also achieved the FA Respect and Safeguarding certificate and Paula gave me the Sport Leadership Badge. I wear the badge proudly while coaching players at the club on Friday and Sunday. I enjoy helping, speaking and supporting young people; it improves my leadership and social skills which will help me in future to work independently.

## Thanks

I am very thankful to Paula, all my friends at the Second Half Project, my tutor coach Phil (pictured below with me wearing my FA coaching badge) and Paul Jubb my coach and mentor from the club for giving me an opportunity to coach players at the club. Also, to my mother who has been very supportive giving me the push and encouragement to achieve new skills in life.





# Where Am I Now

Hello my name is Wesley I'm 20 years old and I live in Hull. I have athetoid cerebral palsy. It affects my arms and legs so I use an electric wheelchair via a head switch which is positioned on the right side of my head to help me to get around everywhere. I'm unable to talk so I have an ECO2 communication aid which I use via the same head switch which enables me to talk electronically and use the internet and my mobile phone. Also I have my own adapted car where my wheelchair goes on a tail lift, this takes me up then I am strapped in and somebody takes me to where I need to go.

I went to Portland College in Mansfield until July 2012 where I learned how to live life to the full and do things independently because it was my first time away from home and I hadn't done anything like it before. I think that doing the English Speaking Board exam has made me more outgoing and confident to speak out and say what I think and I also think my English has definitely improved when I need to write articles like this for people to read.

After that I came back home and I'm currently living with my Mum but I do have a team of



personal assistants who come to take me out swimming, rock climbing, fishing, shopping and to take me on holidays and to college.

I now go to Hull College on two afternoons a week where I'm currently studying IT, English and maths but I'm looking at Bridlington College because I would like to do some kind of graphic design course which I would be starting in September. One of my personal assistants suggested it to me because he thought that I could do something like it and it would be good for me to go into but I'm looking for something where I don't have to draw anything because I'm unable to draw either physically or on the computer so I would like templates of the work already saved on the computer so I could just insert and reposition everything to where I would like them all to be.

I'm going to keep doing my English and maths at Hull College because everybody knows me and I have a good rapport with everybody there now but I'm going to stop doing IT.

I'm also a volunteer with 1 Voice which is a national charity which supports people with AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) but I'm finding it really difficult to get people in my area to be interested in it, so I really want to try and concentrate on getting the graphic design course up and running because I think that it's something that I would love to go into and it's definitely something that I'm interested in.



# Useful Organisations

Action for Sick Children  
[www.actionforsickchildren.org.uk](http://www.actionforsickchildren.org.uk)

Afasic  
[www.afasicengland.org.uk](http://www.afasicengland.org.uk)

Ambitious about Autism  
[www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](http://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk)

Anti-Bullying Alliance  
[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

Association for Real Change  
[www.arcuk.org.uk](http://www.arcuk.org.uk)

British Association for Supported  
Employment  
[www.base-uk.org](http://www.base-uk.org)

British Institute of Learning Disabilities  
[www.bild.org.uk](http://www.bild.org.uk)

Cerebra  
[www.cerebra.org.uk](http://www.cerebra.org.uk)

Challenging Behaviour Foundation  
[www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk](http://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk)

The Communication Trust  
[www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk)

Contact a Family  
[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)

Council for Disabled Children  
[www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)

Dimensions  
[www.dimensions-uk.org](http://www.dimensions-uk.org)

Disability Rights UK  
[www.disabilityrightsuk.org](http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org)

Down's Syndrome Association  
[www.downs-syndrome.org.uk](http://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk)

Dyslexia-SpLD Trust  
[www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk](http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk)

Family Fund  
[www.familyfund.org.uk](http://www.familyfund.org.uk)

Foundation for People with Learning  
Disabilities  
[www.learningdisabilities.org.uk](http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk)

Home Farm Trust  
[www.hft.org.uk](http://www.hft.org.uk)

Housing and Support Alliance  
[www.housingandsupport.org.uk](http://www.housingandsupport.org.uk)

I CAN  
[www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)

IPSEA  
[www.ipsea.org.uk](http://www.ipsea.org.uk)

Kids  
[www.kids.org.uk](http://www.kids.org.uk)

Macintyre  
[www.macintyrecharity.org](http://www.macintyrecharity.org)

Mencap  
[www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

nasen  
[www.nasen.org.uk](http://www.nasen.org.uk)

National Autistic Society  
[www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

National Deaf Children's Society  
[www.ndcs.org.uk](http://www.ndcs.org.uk)

National Development Team for inclusion  
[www.ndti.org.uk](http://www.ndti.org.uk)

National Network of Parent Carer Forums  
[www.nnpfc.org.uk](http://www.nnpfc.org.uk)

National Parent Partnership Network  
[www.parentpartnership.org.uk](http://www.parentpartnership.org.uk)

Preparing for Adulthood  
[www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk](http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk)

RNIB  
[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

Scope  
[www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)

Sense  
[www.sense.org.uk](http://www.sense.org.uk)

Shaw Trust  
[www.shaw-trust.org.uk](http://www.shaw-trust.org.uk)

Short Breaks Network  
[www.shortbreaksnetwork.org.uk](http://www.shortbreaksnetwork.org.uk)

Sibs  
[www.sibs.org.uk](http://www.sibs.org.uk)

Together for Short Lives  
[www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk](http://www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk)

Voiceability  
[www.voiceability.org](http://www.voiceability.org)

Whizz-Kidz  
[www.whizz-kidz.org.uk](http://www.whizz-kidz.org.uk)

Young Epilepsy  
[www.youngpilepsy.org.uk](http://www.youngpilepsy.org.uk)

Young Minds  
[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

## Statement of Association

The Transition Information Network is based at the Council for Disabled Children.  
The Council for Disabled Children is hosted by the National Children's Bureau.  
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