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**NICHI Small Grants Case Studies**

The Networks Involving Communities in Health Improvement (NICHI) Project funded innovative projects that promote health and well-being within communities. The scheme is open to community and voluntary groups that operate within the areas of the Northern area - Antrim, Carrickfergus, Newtownabbey, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Moyle, Larne, Cookstown, Magherafelt & Coleraine.

**NICHI Small Grant Case Studies 2014/15**

South Antrim Community Network

**Name of project:** Mallusk Community Group

**Aim of project:** To educate toddlers the importance of dental care

**Target group:** Toddlers & parents

**Activity /outcomes:** To educate toddlers on how to look after their teeth

**Benefit:** Toddlers from Antrim/Newtownabbey area will know how to clean their teeth. The group were educated on the importance of healthy eating and where good food comes from.

**Project highlights:** The kids loved a fun and innovative way to look at why and how you should clean your teeth properly; very fun and interactive

North Antrim Community Network 2014/15

**Name of Project:** Lint Dam ‘Life share’ Project

**Aim:** To manage the revitalization of a wet meadow and overgrown riverside area

To build an allotment area where people can learn about the natural habitats in the area

To organise open days and activities for children and young people around growing food and biodiversity

To organise cookery demonstrations, grow vegetables and tackle food poverty

**Target Group:** The primary target group is men aged 50+

**Activities:** Planting and growing vegetables and organising cookery and craft classes for a group of men for 4 weeks

**Outcomes:** Outcomes included participants were fully engaging with the activities and building and/or cementing relationships within the group. As the project development the men were more open to discussing feelings. Overall the group was more aware of the positive impacts on community health and plan to develop this area of work.

**Benefits:** Participants loved having something practical to go to and through action came talking and the admission that they do face health issues. They enjoyed using their hands and learning new skills in some cases. They also began to articulate thoughts and hopes for the future, particularly through this type of project.

**Highlights:** It is heart-warming to see older men coming along to our activities. This group is very much isolated and less likely to talk about feelings or circumstances. The overwhelming feedback was, “We want more of this”. One man said that we would never know the difference it made to him personally. It has shown our group that we need to explore more opportunities for men in our community. We now have men suggesting and wanting to organise things themselves which is most encouraging**.** Causeway Western Shores Area Network

Causeway Western Shores Area Network 2014/15

**Name of project**: Slievegallion Active Retirement

**Aim of project**: Reduce social isolation

**Target group**: Older people

**Activity /outcomes**: physical activity programme over the winter

**Benefit**: Keeping active over the winter and keeping in touch with each other

**Project highlights**: participants reported returning to activity after some time of feeling they could not be physically active

**NICHI Small Grants Case Studies 2015/16**

South Antrim Community Network

**Name of project:** Eating Yourself Happy

**Aim of project:** To promote a healthier lifestyle and improve emotional/social/physical health & wellbeing amongst socially isolated and disadvantaged women

**Target group:** Socially isolated and disadvantaged women

**Activity / outcomes:** The project educated people living in a disadvantaged of how to lead a healthier lifestyle

**How did people involved benefit:** This project targeted women living in a disadvantaged area

**Project highlights and learning:** This project encouraged women to cook their own hearty, healthy meals & encouraged them to lead a healthier lifestyle

North Antrim Community Network 2015/16

**Name of Project:** Mouth Matters

**Aim:** The aim of the programme is to promote the concept of helping 12-15 participants to achieve a healthier smile. It will look at tooth development, teething, primary and permanent teeth and tooth loss along with disease and problems in the mouth, medical and lifestyle factors that can cause poor oral health

**Target Group:** Parents and careers are the primary target group.

**Activities:** A 6-week course of Information and awareness raising for 12-15 participants on the importance of good oral health for the participant and their families

**Outcomes:** Oral health care awareness was raised and highlighted to participants. One participant who had not visited the dentist unless it was to get problem teeth removed is now on a course of treatment to fix long standing problems. Some of the participants were grandmothers to small children and were very interested in how to introduce children to the dentist. The participants who attended were very enthusiastic and have changed many aspects of their lifestyle and habits following this course.

**Benefits:** This course has been very useful to the participants who found it informative and very hands on. They said that the “‘do’s and ‘don’ts’ were a real eye opener”. One lady commented that, “Your mouth is far more that eating and talking. It affects your whole wellbeing”. Simple things like brushing your teeth with a dry brush and toothpaste and not rinsing out with water afterwards was something no one knew.

**Highlights:** The participants found the mouth matters course very useful as it highlighted the importance of good oral health. A particular highlight was the information on dry mouth syndrome and the harm it does and products on the market which minimise this condition

Causeway Western Shores Area Network 2015/16

**Name of project:** Garvagh Women's Group

**Aim of project**: Improve access to health information and support

**Target group:** Community

**Activity /outcomes:** 6-week weight loss programme and health fair

**Benefit:** Engagement with leisure services and health outcomes

**Project highlights:** relationship developed between the group and local service providers

**NICHI Small Grants Case Studies 2016/17**

South Antrim Community Network

**Name of project**: Step Forward

**Aim of project:** To provide physical activity classes to people living in the local area

**Target group:** All community

**Activity / outcomes:** The community felt more empowered to participate in more physical activity classes/activities

**How did people involved benefit:** The benefits of the project included the community participated in a new form of physical activity encouraging them to keep this ongoing in the community

**Project highlights and learning**: The group realized that physical activity was fun & enjoyable

Causeway Western Shores Area Network 2016/17

**Name of project:** Harry Gregg Foundation

**Aim of project:** Increase participation in Physical activity

**Target group:** Women

**Activity /outcomes:** Walking group

**Benefit:** Mums of players getting involved in keeping active

**Project highlights:** Increased involvement in physical activity among women in the area

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