

NEWS RELEASE:

19 March 2010



The following press release has been written by the Envision team of young people at Bruntcliffe School, Morley. The students are passionate about raising awareness of issues surrounding homelessness and are all aged 16-17.

Bruntcliffe Students Beat The Cold!

Last night, sixth form students at Bruntcliffe School taking part in Envisions School Programme raised money and awareness by experiencing being homeless for a night!

We wanted to raise awareness about the growing problem in Britain and raise money for those in need. The Envision programme allows students to get involved in local issues we are passionate about and helps us make a recognised difference within the community.

We feel that the suffering of homeless people, some of whom are only children like ourselves should not be overlooked but should be offered help and support, however much we can give.

On Thursday 25th February 16 students and members of staff took part in a sponsored sleep out from 7:00pm to 7:00am. We put ourselves in the position of someone homeless and found out for ourselves what it feels like to try to sleep on cardboard in the cold. The sleep out took place in the Bruntcliffe School car park where we had access to toilet facilities and where hot drinks were available until midnight, however, sitting inside was not an option! Each student raised money through sponsorship, we have already raised an incredible £1500 to donate to St. George's Crypt, a homeless shelter in Leeds helping those without basic necessities. We will also be donating clothes to the shelter and going to help out and meet with some of the recipients of our donations.

It was a tough challenge for the students to tackle the weather but hopefully it will only make us more compassionate for those who sleep out without any other options. Kelsey, a student taking part commented "I'm nervous about the sleep out but hopefully the achievement in the morning will override the hunger and cold!"

Envision spokesperson Sarah Holtam added: "The team were incredibly excited about the opportunity to fundraise and raise awareness about a topic they feel so strongly. This was entirely their idea; they've done all the hard work to make it a reality and deserve to feel very proud - they've raised an incredible amount of money to support vulnerable people in and around Leeds as well as ensuring people are talking about this really important issue."

UPDATE: *Representatives from the team also featured live on BBC radio Leeds Alex Belfield's morning show (Johnathan L'Anson's slot) with to talk about their project.*

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Event Details:

Where: Bruntcliffe School, Bruntcliffe Lane, Morley

When: Thursday 18th March 2010

Time: 7pm – 7am

Attending: 20 Students from Bruntcliffe School's Envision team + Envision Staff.

The team challenge any members of the press who think they're hard enough to come down!

There will be plenty of photo opportunities throughout the night as the young people take part.

Notes to Editor:

- Bruntcliffe School – As a comprehensive school, Bruntcliffe provides a broad, general education for students of all abilities. All of these have an entitlement to develop their full potential as individuals and as citizens of a wider society.
- Envision was founded by four young people in June 2000 as a response to the environmental and social issues facing British society in the 21st Century.
- Today Envision supports teams of 16-19 year olds from 130 schools and colleges in Birmingham, Leeds and London, helping over 2000 young people every year to design their own **local community projects** tackling issues ranging from street crime to climate change. The experience builds **confidence, aspirations and skills** inspiring the next generation of young community leaders.
- On Wednesday 10 February, Bruntcliffe Envision students were among 20 young people from across Leeds who attended Envision's Youth Forum on Homelessness at St. George's Crypt in the city centre. The young people were given the opportunity to look around the newly refurbished Crypt, one of the biggest organisations working with homeless people in Leeds, and put questions to local decision makers, experts and organisations working with vulnerable people in the city. Panellists included: Reverend Steve Dye of St. Georges Crypt, Anand Sharda from the Young Person's Project, Jocelyn Bass of the Sojourner Scheme, Patricia Fas from the Big Issue North and Dave Patterson from Unity in Poverty Action.