

Project Name **Connection Hubs**

Developing an core official online presence for the project and then creating 'connection hubs' within a range of Social Network Sites and other online spaces actively used by young people from the area. These hubs are fed with regular updated content, and offer young people a point of contact with the project and it's official core online presence.

Detailed description

Through projects such as 'Content Creators' a significant amount of positive social media content will be created. It is important that this content is not lost, but is made available to young people in the online spaces they use.

Creating '**Connection Hubs**' involves going out to the social media spaces where young people are already active and sensitively feeding positive and educational content into these spaces. Furthermore, it creates a presence for the project in the spaces where young people are – making young people aware of the support it can offer should they encounter personal issues, inappropriate content, conduct or contact online.

In practice, there should be a **central content hub** on the public internet where the project is accessible to young people. This may feature videos, audio, photos and written works created by young people in Content Creators and other programmes, alongside safety information on e-safety, online opportunities, links to other online safety and support, and contact details (including CEOP) signposting young people to sources of support.

This would be backed up by creating **connection hubs** out on social network sites such as MySpace and Bebo, initially as 'virtual shop windows' onto information in the **central content hub**, but with these progressively developed into spaces in their own right – making use of the social features (friend lists, status updates, groups etc.) within these spaces to keep young people aware of online safety and e-citizenship issues.

Key Challenges

- Identifying a compelling brand and proposition for the core online presence and content hubs (an answer to the question 'Why should I engage with this?')
- Managing the **connection hubs** in a sustainable way (effectively facilitating and supporting a group of 50 young people online can be as resource intensive as supporting that group face-to-face).

Project focus (what are we intentionally addressing?)

- Developing practitioner awareness
- Developing practitioner skills

- | | |
|---|--|
| Preventing... | Promoting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ...inappropriate content | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ...creativity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ...inappropriate conduct | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ...citizenship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ...inappropriate contact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ...critical skills |

- Promoting youth participation
- Promoting other ECM outcomes: _____

Project metrics (how will we know we've succeeded?)

- Levels of engagement with different connection hubs (web analytics, friend lists etc.)
- Number of reports or requests for support directed through the content hubs (management information)
- Feedback from young people (anecdotal and surveys)

Outline risk assessment (draft to be developed before project implementation)

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Response
Risks of harm to young people through interaction on Social Network Sites	Mid	Mid	See 'Youth Work & Social Networking' and 'Safe SNS Applications' papers for a detailed risk assessment checklist and guidance for staff.

Project Plan

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
↓Tasks↓															
Identify platform for central content hub		----	----												
Develop static guidance and information for central content hub e.g. contact lists, safety tips, citizenship tips			----	----	----										
Collect dynamic content for central content hub and assemble outline					----	----									
Identify social network sites actively used by young people in Brent				----	----										
Set up pilot connection hubs in one or two social network site spaces					----	----	----								
Develop content and connection hubs flowing in from content creators and Act by Right online programmes							----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

Key concepts summarised

Content Hub = Central place for bringing together rich media that: celebrates young people's online citizenship activities; supports young people to explore online citizenship; provides engaging safety information; and provides links to further information and support.

Users will tend to browse the information within a content hub. It is a growing 'stock' of content. It could be a blog or static website – but will function best if it can accept or provide RSS feeds of content – allowing content collected in the hub to be easily syndicated outwards.

Connection Hub = A presence within a social networking space through which: rich media from the content hub can be shared in a 'flow' of content over time; and young people can interact with Brent LSCB E-Safety and Online Citizenship programme through friend requests, discussions in groups or on discussions walls etc

A connection hub will usually consist of a page or profile on the social network – actively fed with updates and information by the project. It creates a presence for the programme in the social network site space – and allows for: young people to passively link with the programme and receive content and information in action feeds and flows; young people to actively engage and dialogue with the programme; the programme (through the staff member running the presence in the content hub) to proactively engage with young people and identify issues in the social network space which may require further support and intervention.

Key project partners

Social Network Site providers including **Bebo** may be willing to offer support and guidance for larger scale engagement with their social network sites as **connection hubs**

Further resources and reading

- **Youth Work and Social Networking Final Report.** Available from <http://blogs.nya.org.uk/ywsn/>
- It will be important to seek out resources that offer an understanding of how blogging, tagging, RSS and widgets can be used to share content seamlessly between sites will be advantageous in designing a sustainable eco-system of content hubs and connection hubs.

- There are many online resources available on managing non-profit organisations interaction on social network sites which will be recommended reading during the development of the connection hubs.
 - The Youth Work Online network is a network of practitioners sharing learning on using the web for effective engagement with young people. <http://network.youthworkonline.org.uk>
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See <http://www.timdavies.org.uk/2009/05/11/online-citizenship-for-young-peopl> for background details